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OF

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BROTHER MUSICIANS

REMINISCENCES OF
EDWARD AND WALTER BACHE





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FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE AS A BOY

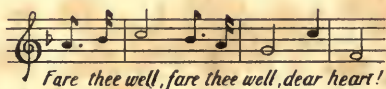
From a Pencil Sketch by his Aunt, Miss Higginson

BROTHER MUSICIANS

REMINISCENCES OF
EDWARD AND WALTER BACHE

BY

CONSTANCE BACHE



WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

METHUEN & CO.
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TO
THE FRIEND OF BOTH BROTHERS

MR. A. J. HIPKINS

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HIS
INVALUABLE HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT

THIS VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY AND GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

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PREFACE

WHEN Edward Bache died, some forty years ago, his family were importuned to bring out a detailed memoir of his life. They felt at that time that the family of any distinguished man are not the people who ought to publish his biography.

But now that nearly half a century has passed since his brief but brilliant career closed, and more than a decade since his brother Walter followed him, it is thought that some short account of the two men—of what they did, and of their comparative influence on their own day and generation—may, no matter from whose pen, be of interest to the present rising generation, to say nothing of the remnant still left of those who knew Edward personally, and of the many who have worked alongside of Walter for the advancement and ennobling of their art.

It was with this view that I decided to become

my brothers' biographer ; though, in order to give, as far as possible, an unbiassed character to the volume, I had originally intended to bring it out anonymously. It has not been possible to carry out this intention, but I nevertheless think it best to adhere to the form in which it was written, as tending to impart a less personal and less intimate character to the narrative.

C. B.

LONDON, 1901

CONTENTS

PART I

FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE

	PAGE
I. LONDON - - - - -	I
II. LEIPZIG - - - - -	18
III. ENGLAND - - - - -	53
IV. ALGIERS - - - - -	61
V. PARIS—LEIPZIG - - - - -	71
VI. ROME—ENGLAND—THE END - - - - -	91
EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN BY FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE - - - - -	103
PUBLISHED MUSIC OF FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE -	126

PART II

WALTER BACHE

I. LEIPZIG - - - - -	129
II. LEIPZIG - - - - -	134
III. LEIPZIG - - - - -	140
IV. ITALY - - - - -	147

V. ROME -	-	-	-	-	161
VI. ROME -	-	-	-	-	172
VII. LONDON	-	-	-	-	184
VIII. LONDON	-	-	-	-	219
IX. LONDON AND BAYREUTH	-	-	-	-	235
X. LONDON	-	-	-	-	253
XI. LISZT'S LAST VISIT TO ENGLAND	-	-	-	-	283
XII. BAYREUTH—LONDON—THE END	-	-	-	-	302
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF ALL THE ORCHESTRAL					
WORKS OF LISZT GIVEN AT WALTER BACHE'S					
CONCERTS	-	-	-	-	322

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE AS A BOY. (<i>From a pencil sketch by his Aunt, MISS HIGGINSON</i>)	-	-	-	Frontispiece
JAMES STIMPSON	-	-	-	Facing page 4
WILLIAM STERNDALE BENNETT	-	-	-	„ 6
FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE	-	-	-	„ 18
MORITZ HAUPTMANN	-	-	-	„ 21
JOHANN SCHNEIDER	-	-	-	„ 35
ALFRED MELLON	-	-	-	„ 38
FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE	-	-	-	„ 90
MEMORIAL WINDOW	-	-	-	„ 103
WALTER BACHE AS A CHILD. (<i>From a pencil sketch by his Aunt, MISS HIGGINSON</i>)	-	-	-	Facing page 129
WALTER BACHE AS A YOUTH	-	-	-	„ 134
FRANZ LISZT	-	-	-	„ 161
THE WORKING MEN'S SOCIETY	-	-	-	„ 200
BÜLOW, BUONAMICI AND BACHE	-	-	-	„ 206
LINES TO LISZT	-	-	-	„ 290
WALTER BACHE	-	-	-	„ 318

BROTHER MUSICIANS

PART I

FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE

“Thy leaf has perish’d in the green,
And, while we breathe beneath the sun,
The world, which credits what is done,
Is cold to all that might have been.”

IN MEMORIAM.

IT is now forty-three years since Edward Bache’s brief but brilliant career closed in death. His life and that of his younger brother Walter together cover a period of unusual interest and importance in the history of Music.

Francis Edward and Walter Bache, though brothers, were almost more like father and son as regards their artistic day and generation. Edward’s planet was setting ere Walter’s star had risen ; the elder brother lay on his death-bed as the younger was just being launched on his musical career. This will explain much in the following pages that

might otherwise seem strange, in the diametrically opposed views held by the two brothers.

The nine years' difference in age which separated these two, slight as it seems when regarded from the hill-top of middle-life, was nevertheless a portentous interval. It represents far more than the diversity in years. It represents a complete revolution in musical ideas and requirements ; an upheaval of ancient traditions ; a new language for an old.

Thus, at the time when Edward was beginning his artistic career, Mendelssohn was, in England as in Germany, the idol of the hour. He had just brought forth, and conducted at the memorable Birmingham Festival of 1846, his "Elijah," the work which, above all else, formed the culminating point of his fame. As a pupil of the late Alfred Mellon,¹ at that time conductor of the orchestra at the Birmingham Theatre Royal, young Bache, a boy of thirteen, played among the violins in the orchestra on that occasion ; was—like his parents—deeply imbued with the artistic and picturesque grandeur of the work, as well as with the magnetic charm of the composer himself. We in our day can hardly realize what this latter must have been. Other great composers have been over here since then, have conducted their own works,

¹ Alfred Mellon ; b. Birmingham 1820 ; violinist, composer and operatic conductor in London ; d. 1867.

and have reaped fame and laurels on our hospitable shores ; but never surely was there such a *furor*, such a *Schwärmerei*, for any personality as for that of the genial, suave and charming Mendelssohn.

That the worship was overdone—that his example, musically, may be said to have done almost as much harm as good—all this is now ancient history. But, at the time when he came, he brought a tender, quickening and ennobling message from the world of genius, and it is no wonder that the world of matter was literally carried by storm.

Even long before Mendelssohn's advent, there was no possibility of a doubt in the minds of Francis Edward Bache's parents as to the career their son should adopt. When only a few months old—he was born on the 14th September, 1833—he would lie on the floor, perfectly contented if his mother were at the piano. From her he inherited his great gift of Music ; and her delicate touch and refined musical taste exercised, even in these baby years, the most powerful influence over him. At the age of eighteen months he had already learnt to ask for the Hallelujah Chorus, and to fetch the volume containing it, and by the time he was three years old he wanted Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, which was for some time his daily food. By four years old he was beginning

to practise the piano ; but he long objected to discords, which, like wine, are an acquired taste. At seven he heard his first Oratorio, "Israel in Egypt," with an emotion which he could hardly control.

At an early date, some time before he studied under Mr. Bennett¹ (of which more shortly), but after the hearing of "Elijah," he wrote, as an exercise for his master, Mr. Stimpson² of Birmingham, an Organ Fugue the subject of which was as follows :—



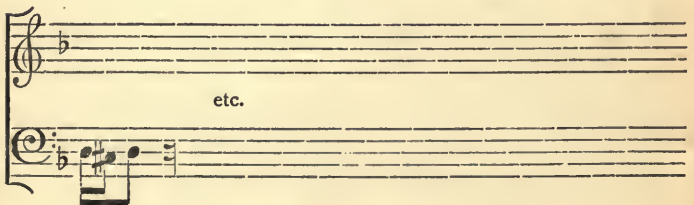
¹ Sir William Sterndale Bennett ; b. 1816 ; Professor ; composer ; Principal of R. A. of Music ; founder of the Bach Society ; d. 1875.

² James Stimpson, 1820-1886 ; Professor ; organist of Town Hall, Birmingham ; founder of the Festival Choral Society there ; editor of "The Organist's Standard Library."



JAMES STIMPSON





This Fugue is quoted with a double purpose ; firstly, as showing what a bold, flowing subject this youth of sixteen had composed ; and secondly, on account of its similarity in character to a certain *Fugato*, written long afterwards, the composer of which did not disdain to employ it as the opening

motive of his overture to a now highly esteemed opera.¹



In 1849, at the age of sixteen, he was placed under the late Mr. (afterwards Sir Sterndale) Bennett in London, with whom he studied composition for three to four years, during which time he also gave music lessons, and took the post of organist in a church besides. He was then sharing lodgings with his cousin, the late Mr. Russell Martineau, M.A. ; and there is no doubt that the economies the two young fellows practised—trying to live on nothing a day, and thrive on it—sowed the seeds of his cousin's delicate health, and of the fatal disease to which Edward succumbed. Bache was the eldest of a large family ; his father, a leading Unitarian minister in Birmingham, had to supplement the very inadequate pittance usually paid to ministers in those days by school-teaching, or rather by taking boarders for the Proprietary School to which his own five sons

¹ Smetana's Overture to "Die verkaufte Braut."



WILLIAM STERNDALÉ BENNETT

Gnaden Lieben, talentvollen
 Freundes. Edward Racher
 für freundliche Erinnerung an
 Julius Hittner.

went.¹ The rigid economy young Bache now practised, and the scrupulous conscientiousness of his youthful account-keeping, show how manfully he was determined to lessen, as far as possible, the burden falling upon his parents' shoulders.

A close friendship with the late Mr. Alfred Foster Barham of Bridgwater, which continued uninterrupted until Bache's death, gave rise to many intimate letters, from which permission to quote has been given.

Just settled in London, he writes to his friend (and occasional mentor, Mr. Barham being some years his senior):—

I think with you that it does one a great deal of good to have to leave home, in more than one way. Firstly one feels how very slight were all the little annoyances and vexations which you speak of as experienced in the course of a home life, compared with, I may almost say, the absence of the same; at all events compared with the general round of little kindnesses which one receives

¹ Amongst the most noteworthy of the boys who passed under the Rev. Samuel Bache's care may be mentioned the Right Hon. W. C. Gully, M.P., the present Speaker of the House of Commons; Mr. W. B. Bowring, late Lord Mayor of Liverpool; Mr. David Martineau; the late Mr. J. C. Addyes Scott; Dr. William J. Russell, F.R.S.; Mr. Henry P. Cobb, M.P.; the late Mr. Charles Flower, of Shakespeare-Memorial-Theatre fame; a young cousin of Lady Byron, and many others.

at home, and does not miss till deprived of them. Secondly, in a worldly point of view, it shows one what one's father and mother must be continually doing to bring one up, and how very easy it is to spend money, and how difficult to get it, etc.

A month later he meets Catherine Hayes :—
“Catherine Hayes is very beautiful, albeit her hair is as red as a lobster, boiled of course.”

How taste has changed! Today we should strike out the word “albeit.”

On January 21, 1851, he made his first appearance in public, in a concert given by himself and the late Mr. Carrodus¹ at Keighley in Yorkshire. “I accompanied young Carrodus,” he writes to a friend, “in a Rondo and slow movement of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, and in a solo by Sivori,” and so on. I quote this sentence as showing that Mendelssohn's great *cheval de bataille* had already begun to prance, and that even in those early days Mr. Carrodus knew how to handle him.

About this time Bache began to publish, and his “Three Impromptus” were the first work to appear in print, though his “Overture to Jessie Gray” had previously been given at the Adelphi Theatre.

¹ John T. Carrodus, 1836-1895; distinguished London violinist; pupil of Molique.

Then followed a spell of serious illness from overwork, necessitating a rest of some weeks at home. With health restored he returned to town, and in the autumn took up his abode for a time with Mr. Alfred Mellon in Long Acre. Here he was encouraged by Mr. Mellon to write an opera, for which the latter somewhere found him a libretto. Apropos of this subject, he writes to his parents:—

134, Long Acre,
November 26, 1851.

I will first tell you what is being done about my operetta. You know what a very bad libretto it was, bad enough to spoil any music. . . .

During the past fortnight I have been introduced to Mr. Palgrave Simpson¹ (the gentleman who writes such beautiful librettos); he gave me a libretto at once with the utmost kindness for me to work upon at some future time; it being the libretto of a three-act grand romantic opera. Meanwhile he heard that I had written an opera called "Which is Which" for the Haymarket, and desired to hear the music and see the piece. So I played him the music and he read the libretto; when he said to me that he considered the *libretto* utterly unfit for stage representation; but was so kindly pleased with *my music*, that he offered to write an entirely new piece to my music, which I

¹ J. Palgrave Simpson, a well-known librettist and theatrical writer.

think was an offer of very great kindness, coming from a man at the head of his profession, and three times my age, to a young beginner.

To his friend Mr. Barham, February 29, 1852, he says :—

I like Mr. Mellon better the more I know of him ; he and Robert Pratten¹ are quite exceptions to the general run of musical people I have met with. You will see that one of my pieces is dedicated to R. Pratten in token of gratitude for the numerous kindnesses he has done me, as it is through him that I am getting on at all ; he having introduced me to the publishers, etc.

To the same, December 31, 1852 :—

I was introduced to Arabella Goddard² the other night, and hope to dedicate a piece to her as soon as I write one which I think worthy of her unrivalled mechanism. I intend to pitch into German like a nigger as soon as our Christmas festivities are over, as I wish to have a good knowledge of the language before going abroad.

The *Athenæum*, commenting on a certain concert in its issue of June 19, 1852, has the following :—

This concert, too, had further the attraction of an important and interesting work of a young

¹ R. Sidney Pratten, 1824-1868 ; distinguished flautist in London, and composer for his own instrument.

² Madame Arabella Goddard, a distinguished English pianist.

English composer, Mr. Bache, who has been already mentioned in the *Athenæum* as an object of some hope. This, to say the least of matters, will not be disappointed by his *Allegro* of a MS. Pianoforte Concerto which was performed by himself. A better first appearance we have seldom met with. A taste for what is sweet, solid, graceful and unhackneyed is evidenced throughout this *Allegro*. It is not frivolous, but neither grimly gloomy, nor a copy of Mendelssohn,—praise which can be nowadays too rarely given;—a movement, in short, not beneath the playing of any player, and which in almost any concert might be listened to with pleasure.

To judge from this essay, we have met with *no Englishman more likely to give us the English composer for whom we have so long been waiting* than Mr. Bache, for whose future appearances we shall watch with interest.

The italics are editorial, and are inserted to draw attention to an opinion that has been frequently expressed, that if Edward Bache had lived to maturity he would have been that English composer so long waited for.

It is like going back to those traditional days when (we are told) such singers existed as “will never be heard again,” to read of the caste for “Don Giovanni” at Covent Garden about this time, which included Grisi and Mario, Formes, Tamburini, etc.; and at Her Majesty’s, wrote Bache, “in a

new opera by Halévy, founded on Shakespeare's 'Tempest,' and entitled 'La Tempesta.' The libretto is by Scribe, and I think is most beautiful. The music is very good, I think, though perhaps not quite classical; it is infinitely superior to Donizetti, Bellini, Meyerbeer, etc. The great attraction, however, was the singing and acting—Lablache was Caliban, Sontag Miranda, and Carlotta Grisi danced and acted Ariel. I never appreciated C. Grisi's talent before; there is none of the conventional ballet-dancing in the part of Ariel, but her exquisite dancing is made subservient to her acting the part properly. I think it was the finest acting I have ever seen; all dumb-show, of course."

A letter to his cousin Mr. Russell Martineau about this time explains the position of his mind and his difficulties, owing to want of health and want of funds :—

February 20, 1853.

DEAR COUSIN RUSSELL,

I have not answered your letter before as I have felt a desire when I did write to write a long letter about my exact professional views, in answer to your last letter, which I fully appreciate, though I do not altogether agree with it. . . .

I will now go, with your leave, to a little explanation of my musical wishes and doings as seemingly opposed to one another. Last Easter twelvemonth, twenty-one months ago, I had a

serious illness which obliged me to leave London altogether. I then, you remember, came to Birmingham, and for three months did nothing but recover my strength. In that three months I thought a good deal about art, and I found that I must make my art more practical before I could succeed ; in fact that I must not only try to write cleverly and in a certain form for my master to see, but must also try to invest my compositions with a sentiment which should appeal to people's hearts and understandings. I then wrote another P. F. Concerto and a Violin Quartett and several other pieces which were more calculated for real performance than what I had done before. Then I found myself utterly without money and means of continuing my education ; papa had few pupils, and I did not like to apply to him to send me to London again. Just then came a commission for a P. F., which took me up to London for a little time. Then Mr. Mellon renewed his interest in me, and gave me the book of an opera to work upon for the Haymarket Theatre. I came down to Birmingham and worked two months at this opera, which I then took up to London finished. I must now specify that at this time my knowledge consisted only of classical forms of composition and of classical piano music ; I had no knowledge of the stage and no idea of conducting ; and the orchestra I as yet only knew theoretically. When I went up with this opera ready, Mr. Mellon said that if I would stay in London he would give me an engagement at the theatre till I could get

better business. I then (November 1851) came up to live with Mr. Mellon, and employed my time in working at another operetta by Mr. Palgrave Simpson (who was so pleased with my first attempt that he kindly gave me a beautiful book to work upon). Also I wrote two or three little piano pieces, which were published at Campbell and Ransford's. After Christmas I returned to town, and then began again to think of my project of going abroad, which for the last three years has been uppermost in my wishes. Luckily I obtained some good teaching as deputy for a gentleman out of health. I also played frequently in the operas at the Haymarket, thereby increasing my knowledge of the stage, and becoming used to play to a conductor, which is the most useful step towards becoming a conductor myself. Addison¹ then offered me a yearly engagement, to look over proofs, etc., and write piano pieces for them. Of course I accepted, as, through being connected with such a house, I should subsequently get position and teaching. Also the money would be an object, as I was desirous of getting every penny I could towards going abroad. In the midst of all this work I wrote my Piano Concerto in E, under the disadvantages of little leisure and being in the same house with Hausmann practising the violoncello. I got out of health at Midsummer and returned home to Birmingham, with my head full of a Flute Concerto for Robert Pratten, which I have never had out of my head from that time to

¹ Of the firm of Addison, Hollier and Lucas, for whom he did much work.

this, but have always given my leisure thoughts to. I have found excessive difficulty in its composition, as I do not wish it to be like ordinary flute music ; but to be good music and yet nice for the flute. As soon as it is finished I think of doing a Pianoforte Sonata. Mind you, these first works take me much more time and trouble than the same kind of things will do afterwards ; as I shall have to make my reputation by *them* or not at all, whereas, when one is accepted as an original thinker, then one may begin to write more at one's ease ; I do not of course mean more carelessly ; but I feel a consciousness of having many ideas which would not do at first, till preceded by other things more in accordance with the standard models. Now concerning publishing a Concerto or other heavy work at present, this is the state of the case. I am dependent almost entirely for my prospect of going abroad on my engagement at Addison's ; now if I print a Concerto at present it would be a dead weight on their shelves, and would lower my marketable value ; moreover, I wish to play my Concerto several times more in public and see what effect it produces, before I decide on publishing it at all.

My ideas then are these. Before I leave England, to print one carefully written Piano Sonata so that people may see that I did not learn everything in Germany. Then, while I am in Germany, to supply Addison's with a light P. F. piece every now and then, in order to earn a salary from their house, while I am devoting all my energy to im-

proving in classical composition. Then I should hope to return to London in a year or two with two or three classical chamber compositions which I could fairly rest my claims upon ; *then* it will be for me to think whether I shall write any more light piano music or not. Meanwhile what I have written will get me pupils ; which the finest classical music would not be so likely to do. I must tell you that now I take infinitely more pleasure in *classical music* than I ever did before, and that I am studying Mozart's and Beethoven's Symphonies in score most earnestly.

Now concerning the light piano music, I think you rather wrong it. I must say that I would rather be a writer like Schulhoff than like Silas, because Schulhoff has marked originality and beauty though in a light style, whereas Silas is at present not marked by any distinctive feature, though his music is solid and clever. In this also have I found the difference since I began to write for *reality*. I have now to spend infinitely more time over shaping a movement or turning a passage than I had to do when I merely wrote to show to Mr. Bennett, as I know how severely a new composer is tried by critics, connoisseurs, etc., who will often overlook beauties in their wish to find a fault. I have never taken so much pains with anything as with this Flute Concerto which I think is quite my best work yet. One word for my poor abused light pieces : I have really taken as much pains about them as I could about a Sonata. People who know nothing of music say

to me, "We like your pieces so much, Mr. Bache, because there seems to be exactly what ought to be in each part and no stop-gap or nonsensical filling-in." They are not aware that that is the result of many hours' thought, as I often sit a whole morning and write not a bar and obstinately reject everything till I feel I have got the right. Excuse my saying this, but I only do it in self-defence, not out of any conceit about such trifles. But I must say that I would *sooner* have written my *Galop di Bravura* than many a Sonata which is only printed to lie on the shelf a dead weight on account of deficiency of anything like idea.

II

LEIPZIG

1853

L EIPZIG! That magic name! At the time of which I am writing it was the Mecca of every young musical aspirant, the Parnassus of his ambition. It was just in the zenith of its fame, *i.e.*, under the ægis of Mendelssohn's great name, at the time that Mr. and Mrs. Bache began to entertain the idea of placing their son under his immediate personal care. But the death of the great Master, not very long after his visit to Birmingham, put an end to this hope. It did not, however, alter the prospect of Edward's going there; and, as intimated in a letter already quoted, he was busy preparing himself, by a study of the language, for the contemplated change.

He had gone through his school-years with satisfaction and even with distinction, having been head-boy in mathematics, for which he gained the medal; second in German; and first, with another boy, in French.



FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE AT THE AGE OF 19

(From a Daguerreotype)

He had gone through his apprenticeship in London with equal satisfaction to his teachers and friends there. Mr. Bennett had an almost paternal affection for him, and of all his pupils Bache is believed to have been the nearest to his heart. It is certain that he trod in his musically-adopted father's steps: the influence of the teacher was noticeable in all the compositions of young Bache's London years, and what could the paternal heart of Mr. Bennett desire more?

In this connection Mr. J. R. Sterndale Bennett, son of the late Sir Sterndale Bennett, in a letter to Miss (Margaret) Bache in 1899, says:—

I have a remembrance of your brother Edward in our drawing-room at Russell Place. I was always brought up to understand that he was my father's most important pupil. I remember also the walks we took with our nurse to make inquiries when he was ill, the street, the house, etc., where he lived, and the seriousness with which our reports were received on our return home; and I feel sure that the premature end to such a promising life was deeply felt by my parents, or I could not have preserved even such memories as I have done of the sad time. An uncle, a younger brother of my mother's whom I had not seen for many years, was in my house the other day, and we naturally talked of old times. He knows nothing of music or the musical world, having been a clergyman in

remote villages all his life, and he startled me by asking about your brother. He told me what a remarkable young man he was, how his whole bearing, his grand forehead, his intellectual expression, made him the subject of remark and inquiry in any society when he appeared; how no one who saw him could for one moment fail to recognise that he was richly endowed with mental gifts.

He had tried his wings in opera, in which he was fathered by such able men as Alfred Mellon and Palgrave Simpson.

It now remained for him to go through the deep waters of Leipzig pedagogy—of that Leipzig which was the city of Bach, if also the haunt of Mendelssohn.

Leaving England in the autumn of 1853 he soon made himself a place in the circle of young men, English and others, then studying in Leipzig, and one of his first letters to his parents contains the following:—

October 24, 1853.

Today I have seen Sigismund Schwann, who has been here now for a year. He wishes particularly to be remembered to you. . . . Also there is at Leipzig Dickens's son, who is a friend of Schwann. . . . Russell Taplin has introduced me to a very nice friend, who is waiting like

myself for private lessons from Herr Hauptmann.¹ This young man's name is Francesco Berger;² his parents live in London, but his mother is German and his father Italian. He speaks equally well all three languages, having just been in Italy four years studying music. He is the cleverest young musician I have ever yet met with, and will be of the greatest use to me. So you see I have already plenty of company.

TO HIS PARENTS.

Leipzig,

November 20, 1853.

I have had also two lessons from Herr Hauptmann; of course yet I have not done much that is new with him, as I must first go through what I have learnt; and now again I feel how many thanks are owing to Mr. Stimpson for the excellent foundation he gave me in counterpoint, in which I am sure he is as good a master as possible. The reason that I do not allude to Mr. Bennett's instructions is that they were not so much in counterpoint as in composition, which I will not now pursue under any master at all; so that my object with Herr Hauptmann is to continue and perfect those studies which I commenced with Mr. Stimpson. I only explain this that you may not think

¹ Moritz Hauptmann, 1792-1868; one of the most celebrated theorists and contrapuntists of his day; director of the Thomas-Schule in Leipzig.

² Mr. Francesco Berger, a well-known London Professor and composer; Hon. Sec. of the Philharmonic Society.

I undervalue Mr. Bennett's most valuable instructions, but they were in a different branch.

The last Gewandhaus concert was much nicer than any of the preceding ones; they played a Symphony of Beethoven, and were quite in their element. It is quite a different thing to hear them play German music, and French or Italian. In German music, from Beethoven's Symphonies to Strauss's Waltzes (which are to my taste perfect works of art as far as they go) they play beautifully; but in Italian and French they don't appear to understand it at all—I even think that Mendelssohn's music would be better played in England than here, but not the other German music.

I have several nice acquaintances here. There are Taplin and Berger (the young Englishman I have told you about before), then Schwann and his cousins and young Dickens; all English. Then Messrs. Perkins and Parker, the two first Americans I knew here, and since then six more, all very nice fellows, and most of them studying music. I get a lesson every week from Herr Hauptmann, who is very kind, though it is difficult for me to understand all he says.

TO HIS PARENTS.

Leipzig,

December 5, 1853.

I dine every day at the Hôtel de Bavière table-d'hôte. It is the best place in Leipzig; and one meets very nice people. I have several times met

English travellers there, and all the German aristocracy go there. For instance, one day you find next to you the Saxon Minister, another a Count, another a Princess, and so on ; which sounds very grand, but is pretty much the same in appearance as plain Mr. or Mrs. in England. Yesterday I sat next to Hector Berlioz, who is here giving a grand concert of his own music. Also Dr. Liszt has been here at the Hotel. Berger dines with me ; we have tried one or two cheaper places, but don't get enough meat to eat.

Berger's father is coming here this Christmas, on purpose to see him ; I suppose you won't be tempted likewise.

“ Also Dr. Liszt has been here ! ”

The one life that was to influence, above all else in the world, that of his brother Walter, a lad just emerging from childhood—and Edward never knew him personally, though at such close quarters. It reminds one of the “ Ships that pass in the night, and speak one another in passing,” except that these two ships never spoke one another.

His character and perceptions were rapidly maturing on the genial soil of Leipzig. On December 24, 1853, he wrote to Mr. Barham his general impressions of the worth of what he was doing :—

I expect to derive the greatest benefit from my studies with Herr Hauptmann. . . . I have not for the last three or four years had such an opportunity to read and think about my art, and also to become intimately acquainted with so much music, owing to the quantity of business work I have always had to do. So the result of my thoughts is the following with regard to my past musical life.

I have all my life endeavoured to have through all my compositions one leading idea, and a unity; and not a collection of smaller ideas. This has been the source of my greatest perplexity, as I had no one to tell me that that was right. I now feel it is the proper way of thinking; I have played much new music since I came here, and I find that Mendelssohn has always composed on that principle, and also Beethoven in all his best works; Mozart not so much (I think). Of course that is the primary condition of all Italian Opera composition. So I now feel a certainty, where before all was vague. . . .

A well-trained ear (*i.e.*, trained by hearing good works) will always, I think, if one is conscientious, prevent one from giving forth what is bad; but this education helps one to save such an enormous quantity of time hereafter; by facility in separating the gold from the dross at once. Of course no study can give *design and ideas*; they spring from one's very life, and are the result of outward circumstance, seized hold of and applied by a poetical mind; but study can enable one practi-

cally to seize the good, and reject the bad ideas, without wasting energy and time upon them. *Zum Beispiel*; I consider Bellini a man of peculiar genius; but he didn't know what to do with it—Donizetti, not so much genius, but enormous practical art; consequently the greater man of the two. So you see my feelings. I wish to go on in composition exactly as I have hitherto; but I hope to gain more certainty. I have quite made up my mind for at least a year in Italy under some *maestro*, when I have finished thoroughly here, and if possible a year in Paris afterwards, the two latter being chiefly for the study of the Opera; as my aim is to write *English Opera for an English theatre*; and I see plainly enough already that I must thoroughly understand the stage of other countries, as we have *no national school of Opera yet*, and so I must learn elsewhere if I want to produce Operas to last. So you see how ambitious I am getting; but I also see that everything is open in this world to a man who is fit for it; and I wish to be a thoroughly educated composer; as the old talk of genius is all humbug, and destroys many a young fellow. If he have talent and education he may produce a work of genius; without them certainly not.

With the closing of this year 1853 it would be well to cast a glance round, and see what the contemporary musical position in Europe was.

Mendelssohn had been dead six years, but his

spirit still held nearly absolute sway over Leipzig ; Chopin had been dead four years, but Paris, his chosen home, had not yet awakened to his genius ; the revolution of '48 had made an exile of Wagner, who had taken refuge in Switzerland ; Bülow had just taken his bold step of self-emancipation by his flight to Wagner there ; Liszt was in Weimar, making propaganda for the (at present) *verfluchte Zukunftsmusik*,¹ but especially for his poor struggling Wagner ; Brendel was starting his anti-Philistine crusade for the same purpose, with Schumann, in Leipzig ; Berlioz was pushing his bizarre fortunes in Paris, with a few tentacles stretched out into Germany as opportunity offered ; Rubinstein had begun his concert tours in Europe ; Russia, as yet almost unknown musically, was nursing up Borodin, Tschaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, etc., for future fame ; the first just a year younger than Bache ; the two latter still in their school-boy days.

In England Hallé² had recently started on his successful career ; whilst Arabella Goddard had just made her *début*, noteworthy from the fact that her *cheval de bataille* was Beethoven's great Sonata in B flat, Op. 106, and that not only was

¹ "Confounded Music of the Future."

² Sir Charles Hallé, 1819-1895 ; born in Germany, but settled in England as Professor, pianist and conductor.

she the first to play it in public in London, but that *she played it by heart*, a procedure which in the case of other pianists, later and even greater, was severely reprehended ! As composers we had at this time Bennett for chamber music ; and in opera Balfe and Vincent Wallace.

The new year opened happily, as the following letter home shows :—

TO HIS PARENTS.

Leipzig,
January 2, 1854.

A very happy New Year to all the good people at Fairview House, Edgbaston.¹

We have had a very pleasant time of it here. On Christmas Day Berger's father came, and eleven of us had a first-rate dinner together in the Hôtel de Bavière. We had what the good people here call an English dinner, I suppose because the bill of fare comprised beef and plum pudding ; but I don't think any Englishman would recognise, in the light, digestible stuff they call plum pudding here, the heavy stuff we designate so in England. Most certainly they do know how to live here ; everything is so well cooked ; I am always just as ready to work after dinner as before, and that not because I eat less, because I think my appetite would astonish you ;

¹ His home in Birmingham.

but because things are fit to eat and properly cooked. So much for eating and drinking.

Berger is gone with his father to spend a few days with some relations at Nuremberg. On New Year's Eve four of the Americans and myself supped together, and drank the New Year in. There is a great fuss always here on New Year's Eve; every one sits up, and there are many dances. In the Hôtel de Bavière there was some music, and we all stayed up drinking wine till three o'clock on New Year's Day.

Yesterday evening there was a Gewandhaus concert, with Beethoven's grand Choral Symphony. Afterwards I saw some singers serenading with a procession of torches; they sang beautifully some of the German four-part songs. When I speak more German I shall enjoy this life very much; it is a better way of living than the English are up to.

Now I must tell you how cold it is; there has always been frost and snow for the last six weeks, and we see sledges about everywhere in the streets, with one or two horses. Also of course skating *ad lib.*, with a security never dreamt of in England.

TO HIS PARENTS.

Leipzig,

January 16, 1854.

. . . When you write to Miss Strutt,¹ pray tell her that I now feel happy for the first time for

¹ An old and dear friend of Mrs. Bache; aunt to the present Lord Belper.

three years as regards my opportunities of study and improvement. It's all very well to say to a young man in England, "Try to write so and so"; but I don't think it's possible to attempt the best species of compositions there in the present state of musical feeling and ignorance. England is the finest place in the world for the best performances of the best works of the best masters; but exclusively the *best*; it is no place for a young man to learn and to make a career in, I am sure.

Early in February he made a short trip to Berlin. He had been working very hard, and was in a disheartened state about his own progress in composition, and thought that a week's change of the musical horizon might be beneficial. Here he heard "Lucia" at Kroll's Theatre; "well done as regards orchestra, but horrible singing; I shall appreciate our English singers after hearing all that I am doomed to hear in that line";—"Masiello"; and "Fidelio" with Johanna Wagner.¹

The state of his feelings with regard to music will be seen in two letters which follow. The first is to his friend Mr. Edmund K. Blyth:—

¹ Johanna Wagner, 1828-1894; niece of Richard Wagner; a singer and actress of great distinction; was the original Elizabeth in "Tannhäuser."

Leipzig,
February 20, 1854.

DEAR EDMUND,

Your letter was decidedly jolly and welcome. You have no idea how I look forward to a letter from an old friend like you now that I am so far away. It is a great change in a fellow's feelings and ideas the first time he comes so far away from home, and probably to stay so long. I can only tell you that I value my old friends more than ever, and constantly think of them while about my work ; in fact, I do not think I could do anything here at all without such stimulus.

Dear old fellow, I must now confess to you that I have for the last two months been very unhappy, owing to the present state of music here, which for a time completely unsettled my ideas and made me doubt if there was anything true and beautiful in the art. You must know that whereas the latter gigantic, mystical, and metaphysical works of Beethoven appear to *me* to have been the striving after something unattainable (in this world) of the greatest musical intellect which ever flourished, and this too after he had exhausted almost all possible forms of artistic beauty and truth, the present race of musicians in Germany take these very works as the beginning of true music ; and as they have not in general quite so much genius as Beethoven, the result appears to me awful. Far sooner would I be Jullien, who does what he attempts, than any

one of them. The consequence of this to me was for some time that I thought I had better give up all thoughts of music, as, if that was music, it was something I did not feel nor care about, and of course I felt dreadfully miserable. As for composing in such a state, it was out of the question.

Now you must bear in mind that Leipzig is the very hotbed of this, and so I found very little sympathy with my feelings, but by degrees I found that most of the public were of my impression, as far as I could judge by conversing, and that it was only a kind of mania among the musicians here. So last week, as I had not composed for some time and could not, I thought I would go to Berlin and hear something there, and also get out of this incessant whirl of symphony music. So I am just returned from a very pleasant week in Berlin. I met some very pleasant Americans there, of taste for painting and literature, and we have had much conversation and visited the picture-galleries together, and I find the very same defects in the present German school of painting as illustrated by such men as Cornelius and Kaulbach. So my thoughts have been turned, and I come back here with my old English warmth of feeling for the true and beautiful, and now I hope to get on again. I have relieved my mind by writing a few pages on this subject, which I shall soon send over to my father. I will request him to send them to you to read if they will interest you. The worst of it is that the executants are all so tainted by this mania, that they do not give a thank ye for music which

does not keep them continually counting their bars and looking out when to come in. The consequence is that you will hear splendidly perfect performances of such colossal works as Beethoven's Choral Symphony, but may sigh in vain for such a performance of "Masaniello" or "William Tell" Overtures as even our little orchestra in the Haymarket used to give. In the one case we felt the *music*, in the other they played the *notes*.

This was brought home to me especially by the performance of "Masaniello" in the Grand Opera in Berlin. Here the house and the *mise-en-scène* are noted as the finest in the world, infinitely superior to Covent Garden, but, despite this, I received no pleasure. It was all so many *notes*, and so much *counterpoint*, not so many *lovely and perfect ideas*, as with our English angels of orchestras. I could scarcely keep my seat during the cold-blooded execution of the overture. Perfect it was, more so perhaps in *p's* and *f's* than in England, but no tone, no feeling. So much for this subject, which is now a very painful one to me. However, my dear boy, there's old England left yet, and I will learn as much as possible here, and afterwards, I hope, in Paris and Italy for a year or two, and then work with heart and soul *in* and *for* England.

Now I must say that I can learn more here than I could possibly in England, so I will get the good, and not forget that I have a *heart*, in cultivating my *head*. Herr Hauptmann is a master of the best school; I confide all my troubles of this kind

to him, and he agrees perfectly with me. I need not say that my admiration of the warm-hearted yet intellectual, jolly old German art increases every day—Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Handel, Mendelssohn and Spohr, etc. I feel more and more the wish to write *opera*; I feel an unsatisfactory feeling with instrumental music as compared with that, which grows upon me every day. When I have finished here, I *will* go to Paris and Italy, if I sell myself to the devil to do it. Meantime, although I have not composed, yet I have worked hard at my fugue studies with Herr H., and also at my German, so I am getting on, although I have yet shown nothing for it. But there are times of change and violent feelings in everyone's life, and these are generally not the times of action.

The next letter is to the late Mr. George Wells Ingram of Birmingham, who was the lifelong friend of both Edward and Walter Bache, and himself endowed with genius; a remarkable instance of a "musician by ear."

Leipzig,

February 21, 1854.

. . . So, once more, I have been regularly miserable (musically, I mean, for otherwise my life is very pleasant), and have not been able to compose anything for some time, my ideas have received one or two such violent wrenches; last

week I could stand it no longer, and packed off bag and baggage to Berlin for a week's holiday. There I attended the opera, and the picture-galleries, and met some nice Americans (thank goodness *not* musicians), and so now feel all right again.

The fact is, George, I may as well say it out, I think music, painting and literature are here going as fast as possible to the dogs; all art here begins where it ought to leave off; their literature with the sublime mysteries of Hamlet, their music with the gigantic Choral Symphony; and as all people are not Shakespeares or Beethovens, the result may be imagined.

I love more than ever all our old favourite works, but I am getting an increasing aversion every day to the gigantic and mystical but unintelligible; for instance, I like Beethoven's Septett better than ever, but the Eroica I do not like; I simply admire it.

On the other hand, very much owing to my intercourse with Berger, I am getting more and more to understand the best Italian art, and there I feel more and more satisfaction every day, in its simplicity and truth, yet perfect adaptation to both one's heart and intellectual feelings.

In England I had not felt the want of this, as I suppose I had about as jolly and smooth a life as possible; but now that perhaps I feel more a man, and miss my customary friends, what could I do without Rossini and Donizetti? I view these two as Handel and Mozart in Italian art.



Johann Degenfelder.

Handel and Rossini speak to one's feelings from above, they seem not to be of this earth ; there is no human weakness in their music ; they are *gods*, not *men*, to us young musicians.

Mozart and Donizetti, on the contrary, are poor weak mortals like ourselves ; they express our feelings in the way we would wish to express them if we had the power. I always look upon Handel and Rossini like those perfect, serene old Grecian statues of the gods ; upon Mozart and Donizetti as more flesh and blood ; upon the former as *instructors and imparters* of elevated ideas, upon the latter as *expressors* of our own ideas and weaknesses.

In April he went to Dresden, partly in order to hear Schneider,¹ the great organist there. He writes to his parents:—

I had an introduction from Hauptmann to Schneider, who received me very kindly and took me up into his organ-loft with him. I told him that I was very desirous to have a few lessons from him if possible this summer ; and I hope I shall be able to manage it. He is the greatest extempore player in the strict style I have yet heard, except Henry Smart of London, whom I consider fully equal, as far as I can yet judge. . . .

The garden-concerts at Dresden are charming ; the admission varies from twopence to threepence, and you take also a cup of coffee. The orchestras

¹ Johann Gottlob Schneider, 1789-1864 ; one of the most celebrated organists of the last century ; lived at Dresden.

consist of twenty-six performers generally, and one hears sometimes a symphony, which is not the case here in Leipzig. I had the good fortune to hear two symphonies—the Jupiter and the E flat of Mozart. You must not imagine that these symphonies are well played; it would be a very poor English orchestra indeed which would not play them much better; these orchestras however are at home in waltzes and polkas by German composers. You can hear nothing so perfect as this in England; it is to me *the feature of German music*. George Ingram would go mad to hear them play waltzes of Lanner or Strauss in the way they do here.

The musical public in Dresden seem to me much pleasanter (*dankbar*) than here in Leipzig; here they are so *blasé*, that nothing but a tremendous noise of drums and trumpets or some bit of clever charlatanism in the scoring will ever move them. . . . I heard no opera in Dresden, as Hector Berlioz was there, monopolizing the opera house with his horrid rubbish. I prefer Wagner to Berlioz, though Wagner is so abominable that you cannot imagine such a noise as yet in England.

Anent this last sentence, and to show that, crude as we may now think these remarks, young Bache was in the majority as regards his own countrymen at that time and far on into Walter Bache's career too, the following is quoted from the *Illustrated London News* of May 6, 1854.

"NEW PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

"The concert concluded with Wagner's Overture to 'Tannhäuser.' This composer (the uncle of Johanna Wagner) is in vogue in Germany at present—on what grounds we know not ; for this specimen of his talents is a mere chaos of confusion—a mass of discordant noises, without form, melody, or meaning."

It was in this spring that Bache made the acquaintance of the late Mr. Julius Kistner, the well-known Leipzig music-publisher, who, both in his business and in his private capacity, was ever a kind and faithful friend to him, as well as to his brother Walter later on. In June Edward made a little trip with him into Thuringia, saw the Wartburg, at Eisenach, "where Luther translated the Bible, and he certainly displayed very good taste in the selection of a nice place to work in, for nothing could be more beautiful in the way of inland scenery."

Thirteen years later (in 1867) Walter also visited the Wartburg, on the memorable occasion of the first performance of Liszt's "St. Elizabeth" there, of which mention will be made later on.

MR. ALFRED MELLON TO EDWARD BACHE.

134, Long Acre,
June 27, 1854.

MY DEAR BOY EDWARD,

I've been on the point of writing to you many times, but until this time never succeeded in making a start—however now here goes. Well, I've received both your letters, the contents of which please me much, as I feel assured you are fast improving, and still remain the same good dear boy I always thought and wished you to be. Go on—work away—learn every mortal thing you possibly can. I must presume, I suppose, that your health is good, although you don't mention it—at least I'll hope it is. . . .

And now touching yourself and your plans—you don't ask me my opinion, but never mind, I shall give it.

It strikes me that you very much overrate Italy and France as regards being fine places for study; you say you've conquered Fugue and double Counterpoint in the 10 and 12, etc., etc. Now what the devil else can you learn in Italy and France? Can you not hear the best Italian operas, the best French and German operas, done in London much better than in any other part of the world? You say you've carefully studied Rossini's best operas—well then, rest assured that you know the very best Italian music that ever was or ever will be written. By all means, if you can, go and see both Italy and France, but not to study; I feel



ALFRED MELLON

almost sure that your errand on an improving point of view would be a sad failure. Mind I'm not saying this as advice—simply as my conviction—do as you like; what does Chorley¹ say, or Simpson? . . .

Now, my dear Edward, recollect all these things, and don't allow any mortal soul to talk you out of writing Fugues; when people say it's all mechanical stuff don't believe them—*they can't do it*; in fact, not one of our very best living composers could really write a *good* Fugue. Have faith in what your master says—I mean Hauptmann. . . .

Now, my dear boy, good-bye, and God bless you. I begin to think Miss Woolgar² had reason to be jealous of you when you lived with me, for she often said that I loved *you* more than I did *her*. I cannot altogether agree with her, at the same time confess that my feeling for you was much more like that of a relation than anything else. Let me sincerely hope that, whatever my feelings are, *that* they will ever remain, and that I may always look upon you as my dearest friend and musical brother.

Bless you, my dear boy,
Yours affectionately,
ALFRED MELLON.

It will be seen from the above letter that Bache

¹ Henry F. Chorley, 1808-1872; author and journalist in London, but best known as a musical critic.

² Afterwards Mrs. Mellon.

was thinking seriously of pushing on to Italy and Paris.

"You have no idea," he wrote to one of his friends, "how glad I shall be when I once finally set foot out of Germany again. I tell you once again how utterly I detest German art, except in the great instances which we have always together admired, and these I like better and better daily."

Mr. Alfred Mellon's remark must have led him to consult older and wiser heads; for, writing to his parents on July 30, 1854, he says:—

I have now made up my mind to return home next January or February certain, and commence work again. I had for some time been thinking of going to Italy from here for a year, which I did not mention to you till it was decided; and I have written to Mr. Palgrave Simpson and Mr. Chorley, asking their advice. They advise me most strongly not to go to Italy to study, but to go in a year or two's time to travel if possible. I still feel confident that there is a great deal musically to be learnt in Italy; but I think it will be best for me to have regular work again as soon as I have done with Hauptmann.

This summer he had a delightful visit from his lifelong friend, the late Mrs. Henry Ames of Liverpool; and in company with her and her nephew he made a little trip to Dresden and the

Saxon Switzerland, ending up with Berlin. From the latter city he writes what he has evidently been long revolving in his mind:—

TO MR. ALFRED FOSTER BARHAM.

Berlin,

July 16, 1854.

. . . I have thought very much about the future, as I do not wish to make a false step; and I have at last decided giving up Italy for the present, as I think my duty is to come back to London and *work* there. If I were to go to Italy for another year, it might induce idle habits which I should never get rid of all my life. So as soon as I have quite finished with Hauptmann I will return to London, and work like a nigger at writing, etc. I have for the last nine months had a perfectly different life from what my life for the last four years has been. In London I felt that I was a working man (or individual, if you please), and that I must do my best in every way; and I always had the thought before me that some time or other I should get to Germany in order (as I thought) to complete my education. So I worked on, and had pretty well confidence in myself. On the contrary, when I came to Leipzig, and had all my time to myself for study, I began to perceive how very little I knew, and how much I had to learn; I began for the first time to appreciate (by hearing and studying) the good Italian operas, which in England I had always perhaps

rather looked down on as works of intellect, though I could not help admiring their beauty. The more I study the operas of Rossini and Donizetti, the more do I find to admire in the enormous intellectual power which they have displayed in planning their pieces, which is quite a separate thing from the more sensuous power which has created their melodies.

As a Northern man, of course these Southern melodies do not address me to the heart, so much as they seem to me a picture of a warm, genial, sunny kind of life of which we all dream occasionally as the life of Italy, and of which we all hope some time, I believe, to taste a little. But every nation has a *kind of feeling*; this feeling must show itself in their melodies as taken by themselves; but the universal intellectual feeling of art, as regards design, proportion, etc., ought to be the same, I think, in all nations, and so it is in the best composers of all nations. The more I study Rossini and Donizetti, the more am I struck by their intense knowledge of human nature. They seem to have sifted the art of music to its first principles, as founded on human nature; and to have built up their systems by rejecting what was opposite to their nature in the very beginning, instead of suffering it to grow up into such a large abuse that people looking at it should think "it couldn't be wrong because there was so much of it."

To instance you one thing I mean; I consider the Italians much greater masters of modulating

and harmony than the present German composers. They are in the habit of looking at a modulation as an *effect upon the mind*, not as so many notes. For instance, when we are in the key of C and modulate to G, does not the first F sharp we hear sound perfectly divine? Of course it does; and therefore must we have a reason for using it, connected intimately with our poetical design of the piece. Thus the Italians conceive the longest of their pieces as one whole; they get the sketch first, and gradually elaborate it on that sketch. The Germans on the contrary, except a few great ones, as a principle make a great many small pictures, and then tack them together with enormous cleverness, and then call it a whole. The *Germans* are *critical* as to the *colouring and execution* of a *picture*; the *Italians* are *perceptive* as regards the *design*.

Berger, my young friend here, makes a very good illustration of this modulation business as having effect upon the mind. He says you may compare the natural modulations to the progress of the sun; so you may. Take, for instance, the key of D major—your piece is in D major. First modulation into A major feels like the mid-day sun; afterwards back to D major. Second modulation into G major feels like the evening setting in; and a man must be a fool who would modulate more after that, as it must have a wrong effect on the mind. Of course these two or three chief modulations can be elaborated so as to embrace every key in the twenty-four; but that

outline is the one suggested by Nature, and if it be violated you can't make a good piece of music.

The Germans, always with great exceptions, attempt to deny this principle in their works, by modulating anywhere and at any time; but, cleverly as they sometimes do it, they cannot produce a clear mental impression by such means, but rather a bewilderment, which is by some people considered the "ne plus ultra" of art, but not by me.

I have one illustration myself of the difference between Italian and German principles. You have just finished a picture consisting of figures and a background: you wish this picture to be viewed from a certain point (say six feet distance) in order to get the general effect. The Italian stands where you ask him, and judges your work by the effect it produces from the point of view you intended; he says "That figure does not seem to me what you intended to express," or in similar words. He does not say "You have put in too many touches of the brush in such and such a bit of the detail;" he judges of the effect. The German on the contrary bustles into your room: "Hay! ha! hi!" says he, and runs up with his spectacles to poke his nose into some corner of the background, upon which he immediately commences criticism. When the two have finished, the German will tell you perfectly where you have failed in mechanical painting, etc., but will not have a word to say as to the general expression of the picture; the Italian on the contrary will not

insult you by supposing you go to paint a picture without knowing grammar, but will point out any faults in the conception of the expression. This is at all events so in music.

I should say now, if I knew any lad twelve or thirteen years old, of great musical genius, "Go to Germany till fifteen years old to learn mechanical grammar wherewith to express your ideas fluently and correctly ; go to Italy afterwards to study *principles of art* as distinguished from *details of execution*.

Full of his intention to return to England by way of Paris, he writes his views on many subjects in the following letter :—

TO MR. INGRAM.

Leipzig,
October 8, 1854.

What will you think of my awfully long silence? . . .

I am determined to return to England next March or April ; and as I shall be quite finished with Hauptmann in a few weeks more, I shall leave here straight for Paris, and spend the winter there. My reasons are these. I think I have now pretty well heard the round of German music, as performed here, and should not have much more experience to get by stopping longer here. I am excessively anxious to live in Paris for three or four months before I finally settle in

England, chiefly because I have never yet lived among what you may call an opera people, and am very desirous of doing so (also among a people of the Catholic religion); and secondly, because I wish to have French pretty much at my finger-ends for after-life. I now speak German enough to make myself understood, and read and write it pretty tolerably, though not nearly as well as French; I calculate it would take me at least five years' residence here to learn it perfectly. At present I speak French with difficulty, though I understand it pretty well to read or write. So I wish to get on a little further with it.

You cannot imagine with what intense curiosity I look forward to the French operas in Paris. Of course I am now familiar with several of the best works of one or two of the best composers there; but I want to hear operas by inferior composers, so as to see the state of musical feeling there. I expect, notwithstanding all people say to the contrary, to find musical feeling in a much higher state in Paris than anywhere in Germany. Here the feeling for music impresses itself more and more upon me as being the pure indulgence and excitement of the curiosity, not of the poetic element in one's nature, and, as such, not to rank much higher as art than a splendid game of chess. I have never yet seen an audience in Germany *moved* in the slightest degree by any performance whatsoever. They sometimes get a little excited, but then it is by some effect of the performer, or some new dodge in the composition, and not by a

heartfelt poetical feeling. Now you know, this one may see any day in England ; and I must confess it, I would sooner see an Adelphi melodrama with the whole audience going with it, than hear the most elaborate German composition, when not a heart beats any the quicker or stronger throughout.

Do you know, George, I don't think I could write a note for German singers or players ; if I did, they would break my heart by their utter want of appreciating one's ideas. They would in an instant seize on any points in the composition or scoring, and make the most possible of these by perfect execution of *p's* and *f's*, *crescendos*, etc., but nothing more. When a German singer sings the finale of "Sonnambula," she doesn't appear any more joyful than she does miserable when she is found in the Count's bed. She sings and screams the *notes* as written, and that's all. I have never yet in Germany, in any performance whatsoever, seen a smile or any look of pleasure exchanged amongst the orchestra ; how often don't we see that in England? eh? They don't know that Bellini scored that final air in "Sonnambula" with the alternate horn and violin notes in the accompaniment, as representing the girl's heart bursting with joy almost. How should they? they never dream of any greater enjoyment than drinking a pot or two of beer.

Now I do expect to find these feelings of sentiment and delicacy in Paris (even though there may be great vice behind them), and I shall

be surprised if I am not delighted with the French operas.

Well! so, George, your next letter from me will probably be from Paris! sounds nice, doesn't it? Perhaps you will come over this winter for a week or two; it is not more than going to Edinburgh, you know. So you just think about it, that's a good fellow. Now I have excited myself too much about the old question to talk calmly about anything else; so I'll let off my steam at two operas which you have never heard, and which I have heard lately here.

"Zampa"—most melodious, brilliantly scored, tender feeling, melodramatic effects; in fact one of the most charming operas I ever heard, fully coming up to the glorious overture.

"Czar and Zimmermann" by Lortzing is quite the best German opera I have ever heard by any German composer, I mean as an opera. He wrote the libretto himself, and that is excellent too. The opera is not perfect; it is not the work of a great musician; but it is the offspring of a kind of roadside genius, abounding in melody, always fresh, always suiting the stage to a T, and intensely comic. Never mind, we'll play it together when I come back, and "Zampa" too; and also some of old Verdi, whom I am over head and ears in, and am going to stick up for, as being as great a man as any of 'em.

You will see by my letters home what I say of Reissiger's church music at Dresden. This is the greatest musical pleasure I have yet had in

Germany. Catholic music is more female in character¹ (owing to the Virgin being always the object of adoration) than Protestant. I wish I could conscientiously be a Catholic ; I never *worshipped* so well as in the Catholic church at Dresden.

It will be seen from the above that he was at a most impressionable period of his life ; all that appealed to the poetical and sentient side of his nature was congenial to him, whilst the drybones, the scientific side of music, albeit he had gone through its drudgery in his studies, seemed to be abhorrent to him as musical art. One or two of the letters last quoted, although containing many crudities, which he himself would doubtless have been the first to acknowledge had he lived to maturer years, are nevertheless inserted, because, though they contain many strictures that may draw forth a smile from the learned, they present also many interesting points, some of which hold as good today as even when they were penned. And it must not be forgotten that German music at this very epoch was itself passing through a stage of transition. If it was, so to say, at a sort of halting-point between the old and the new, it is not to be wondered at that a youth of one-and-

¹ No one has expressed this more strongly than Goethe himself, when he wrote "Das Ewig-Weibliche zieht uns hinan."

twenty, who had thus far been nurtured in the old traditions, should have felt himself as yet in complete opposition to the new gospel just beginning to be preached.

Writing to his friend Mr. Stanley Lucas, the music publisher, on October 11, 1854, he says :—

I am now through with my actual studies. Hauptmann says I can write anything of any kind I please to set about, so that is consoling. By George, it makes a fellow's blood tingle to think he is an Englishman (after reading of the victory at Alma¹). . . . I only hope you will not publish more than you can help of music composed to celebrate the victory; I mean patriotic effusions, such as "Hearts' Blood of the Brave Alma March," etc. I think such things tend to keep the musical profession in low esteem. If we had *one* very great composer of world-wide celebrity among us, there should be a commission to write, like Handel's Dettingen *Te Deum*; but unhappily anything of this kind is only the signal for all the small fry of the profession to be up and doing.

Shortly before leaving Leipzig he sent the following letter as an introduction for his friend Mr. Berger, who was then wishing to establish himself in London :—

¹ In the Crimean War.

TO MR. A. J. HIPKINS.¹

Leipzig,
November 9, 1854.

DEAR MR. HIPKINS,

Allow me to introduce to you Mr. Francesco Berger, my best friend here ; he is a pupil of Hauptmann's for twelve months, and was before that a pupil of Maestro Ricci in Trieste. By this you will see that he is especially devoted to composition. He is now going to settle in London, and as he requested an introduction to Messrs. Broadwood from me I thought I had better give him a letter to you, and request you to take some opportunity of presenting him to Messrs. Broadwood. . . .

I leave here myself in three or four weeks, and go to Paris, where I hope to stay three months, returning to London in March next. I shall be rejoiced to see all my old friends again.

The end of this year found him in Paris, where he spent a couple of months, his primary object being to study the Opera there. While there he finished the "Five Characteristic Pieces," dedicated "to his friend George Ingram," which Mr. Kistner published, and of which Mr. Augener, the London publisher, brought out a new edition in 1898. In

¹ Mr. A. J. Hipkins (of Messrs. Broadwood's); subsequently known by his lectures and writings concerning old musical instruments, especially of the keyboard kind, on which he is one of the first living authorities.

the best of spirits he wrote to this friend on December 23, 1854 :—

DEAR GEORGE,

Here I am, and write to fetch you over at once to join me. I have a room at Hôtel du Continent, No. 3, Rue St. Lazare, Paris ; and shall hope in two or three days to have an answer from you authorizing me to take the next room for yourself. You must come, this isn't far ; it isn't like coming to Dresden, and I should like us two to enjoy a little opera music together once in our lives. . . .

So now, George, come and spend your New Year with me here, substitute frogs for plum-pudding, and Italian and French opera for the Old Meeting organ.

As I expect you will come, I shan't write you a word more now ; and if you don't come, why I'll cut your head off when I come back. So a merry Christmas ; the happy New Year we'll spend together here.

N.B.—1. Théâtre Impérial de l'Opéra.

2. Théâtre Impérial de l'Opéra Comique.

3. Théâtre Lyrique.

4. Théâtre des Italiens.

(Bosio, Gassier, Rossi, Borghi-Mamo, etc.)

Il faut venir.

III

ENGLAND

1855

IN February this year Edward Bache returned to England, with the intention of making London his future headquarters. Full of energy, vigour and high hopes, he was just about to embark on a series of concerts at Hampstead, when the sudden death of his mother came upon him with an overwhelming sense of loss. What this bereavement meant could be understood even approximately by those only who knew intimately the exquisitely pure and aspiring character of Bache's mother. From her, her seven children inherited that passion for music which developed more or less in nearly all of them, but most notably in the two brothers who are the subjects of this volume. She herself was an admirable musician, as music then went, having been brought up in the school of Herz and the leading musicians of that day ; and her wide sympathies and cultivated mind made her the

companion as well as the guiding-star of her elder children. Her premature removal from them, the result of her overworked life, was indeed the greatest calamity that could have befallen them, for her influence would have greatly modified the young characters then forming, which were deprived of its help at so critical a time.

Realizing that for every great sorrow the best panacea is work, Bache returned to London to the further preparations for his Hampstead concerts, which took place this summer. In these he was admirably seconded by his friend, Mr. Deichmann,¹ whose acquaintance he had made before he went to Leipzig, Mr. Berger, then also settled in London, the late Mons. Paque the violoncellist, and others.

Mr. Kistner, Bache's Leipzig friend and publisher, was fond of airing his English in his letters to his favourite ; and some of these are so charmingly fresh and naïve as to tempt occasional transcription from them.

FROM MR. KISTNER TO EDWARD BACHE.

Leipzig,

April 25, 1855.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter and the good news² with the greatest joy, and I translated imme-

¹ Mr. Carl Deichmann, a well-known London violinist and Professor.

² Of his success at a Liverpool concert.

diately, but a little shorter, the Birmingham notice, which I send you inside. . . .

Your beginning was happy, and I am persuaded that with your consequence you will make good success. Every beginning is difficult, but with your talent, your modestie and amability and your diligence, the resultat must be very favourable. Don't lose the patience and your good humour, and be assured that Mr. Auber has very right when he sings: "*Les amis sont toujours là !*" . . .

Frege,¹ my nephews, niece, sister-in-law, Mr. Hallé, Dr. Georg Friederici who is here now, Gurckhaus,² Mr. A. Mayer, and many friends shake your hands, and I beg you to don't forget Arthur O'Leary,³ Miss Stabbach,⁴ Dolby,⁵ Molique,⁶ Bennett and all my friends there.

Ever yours,

JULIUS KISTNER.

TO MR. DEICHMANN.

19, Albert Street, Regent's Park,

July 31, 1855.

DEAR DEICHMANN,

I was very anxious to see you before you left England ; please to write and tell me when

¹ Frege, the near relatives of Hans v. Bülow, and mentioned so frequently in his early letters. To Mme. Livia Frege Edward Bache had dedicated some of his songs.

² Gurckhaus, successor to Mr. Kistner.

³ The well-known Professor at the R.A.M.

⁴ A singer.

⁵ The famous contralto, afterwards Mme. Sainton-Dolby.

⁶ Bernhard Molique, 1803-1869 ; a celebrated violinist and Professor.

you will be back, also whether you will be in London through the winter, as I have been at Norwich making interest for us to give a concert, and will do the same at Birmingham when I go down there, and of course I wish to know whether you will be here. I think we shall be able to make some money, and certainly reputation. I write also to tell you that I saw Mellon yesterday, and he says Costa¹ has written offering you an engagement for Birmingham Festival, as *Mellon's deputy*, he being detained in London by other engagements. . . .

If you do go to the Birmingham Festival, I should meet you there, and we could then arrange plans for the ensuing winter.

Write me a line when you can, to tell me what your present plans are. I have been asked on many sides to give three soirées at Hampstead this winter. Good-bye.

Believe me,

Yours ever very sincerely,

F. EDWARD BACHE.

To Mr. Ingram he wrote, this summer :—

I am very anxious about little Walter, and his learning the organ. I want him to have permission to practise at the New Meeting, and then you would give him a lesson now and then, wouldn't you? It will be the ruin of him, if so

¹ Sir Michael Costa, 1810-1884; Spanish by birth, but settled in England, where he attained a high reputation as a conductor.

decided a wish be not allowed fair play. Please let me know anything you know about the affair, without letting Walter know that I wrote to you, and then I will take further steps : as if I don't look after the poor little fellow in this, no one will, and it is a shame so decided a talent should not have a chance.

This was the year of the Birmingham Triennial Festival, for which Bache wrote some of the local critiques. He afterwards said that this Festival was so perfect he did not wish to hear another. Prophetic words! By the time the next came round he was on his death-bed.

In the autumn he made preparations for a series of Chamber Concerts to be given in Birmingham in conjunction with Mr. Deichmann. The first duly took place ; but on the very day for which the second was fixed, December 14, the musical agent had to send round notices to all the subscribers, postponing the concert on account of Bache's sudden illness.

As late as November 13 he had written to his father from London :—

I just write a line or two to say that I am very well and busy. . . . I am sometimes very melancholy and unhappy now, and it gets worse and worse the more I learn, owing to the bad state of my profession in England. I feel more and more

determined to make my career abroad *if possible* ; it is harder to start there than here, but afterwards there is fame and money to be made, and a happy artistic life to be led, which is impossible in this comparatively uneducated country. . . . I do not forget that I owe you £5, but I cannot pay you just yet, as I find it very difficult to go on from week to week just now. Provisions are immensely dear here, and becoming dearer daily.

I hope all are well at home ; I shall hope for three or four days among you in the winter.

Another letter to his father, written a few weeks before the above, shows so simply how deeply he had thought on the serious subjects of life, though only twenty-two, that a portion of it is here quoted :

October 20, 1855.

I have so long (ever since I embraced the career of an artist, in fact) been so accustomed to look at this world as a mere journey to something else, that I believe I am capable of supporting any bereavement (or amount of them, even) with apparent equanimity ; as long as I have my art to work at, I feel I still have their society and sympathy, which after all is what one values more than the actual presence ; this is the reason I have always shown such a repugnance for the *professor's* as distinguished from the *artist's* life ; because if I once lost this feeling for my art, I am aware how blank and cold this world would immediately

appear to me. Now surely your life, properly considered, is the perfection of the artist's life, that in which the greatest artists have approached nearest to the Divine nature. If you view it in this way, you surely will not look upon the remainder of your journey as a toilsome pilgrimage to be got over, but rather as a short space in which you should try to concentrate the greatest possible amount of good and activity as an offering to her¹ when you meet again. If you look at it in this way, it will be a consolation, and the very grief will be turned into a joy. . . .

You will excuse me for speaking so freely on all these points ; since I took to music I have had long and frequent periods of great distress, and at first her death seemed to complete my misery ; I struggled against it, and worked hard, and I am now happier than I have ever been before in my life, though with a different kind of happiness. It is not *religion* in the way generally understood, but it is all *through my art* ; if you can bend your views to this warm and joyful (artistic) influence of your most sacred of all professions, instead of the mere consoling part of it, you will find relief, I think.

A severe attack of hæmorrhage, following on a previous and slighter attack of the same, now caused doctors and friends to view most seriously that condition which was, in reality, the beginning

¹ His mother.

of the end. For consumption had sowed its insidious seeds in a constitution which was never of the strongest, and which the rigid economies of his early years in London had sorely taxed, in conjunction with the restless energy of his highly-strung and sensitive nature.

On his being sufficiently recovered for a change to be thought of, a winter in Algiers was strongly recommended by the doctors, and finally decided upon. The loneliness of this contemplated change was obviated by the generous offer of a friend, the late Mr. J. C. Addyes Scott, to accompany him to Algiers; and by this kindness the anxieties of his family and friends were greatly alleviated.

IV

ALGIERS

1856

EARLY in January 1856, Bache started for Algiers with his friend Mr. Addyes Scott. Here, as everywhere else, his genial sunny temperament and his God-given talents soon made him the centre of a circle of warm friends and admirers; and he had not been there long before he was urged to give a concert: this by the principal local paper, which jokingly threatened to apply to the English Consul, his kind friend Mr. Bell, to prevent his leaving Algiers until he had done so.

Despite his dangerous and most serious illness, his hopeful nature asserted itself the moment he reached this more congenial climate; and, no doubt partly to alleviate the anxiety of those at home, he wrote in the following cheerful strain before he had been there many days:—

TO HIS FATHER.

Hôtel de Paris, Algiers.

January 29, 1856.

I am only going to write you a few lines by this steamer, as I am so tired of writing at my musical letters for the Birmingham Journal. . . .

I am exceedingly well, better than I have been for a year at least ; everyone tells me I am actually beginning to get fat ; and my work goes on capitally. Addyes is not so fortunate ; he is suffering from a bad cold, but I trust he will soon be better. I have now my piano, and enjoy the life immensely, as I have time to eat, sleep and compose. The weather varies between June and May in England, being often in the evenings cool enough for an overcoat. There are orange trees full of fruit all about, the fruit being now ripe, and geraniums and such things in full flower. . . .

About this time Walter Bache, still a boy at school, was writing most urgently to obtain his brother's consent to his devoting himself to the *violin*. Edward's reply is worth quoting in full, both as a picture of the violinist's life of that time, and because it contains many remarks about the musical profession which may nowadays seem strange, but which applied to it as it then was ; happily it is now free from much of the reproach of want of education, and is becoming every day

further and further removed from this formerly not unmerited slur.

TO HIS BROTHER.

Algiers.

February 12, 1856.

DEAR WALTER,

If you are bent upon pursuing music as a profession, you must remember one or two things. You will have to do with people infinitely inferior to yourself in every way ; as unfortunately there are very few educated men among our English musicians. You will make less money than your equals in social station ; in fact you will find it difficult to get along at all. I should much prefer seeing you a well-educated musical amateur, making your living by something else. You might still in that case play some organ on Sundays, and, if the passion were still too strong, you might still give some lessons, or play at a small theatre in your leisure evenings.

Suppose you were in the profession. You will have to work always four, five and six hours a day in giving lessons, which is at the best a very precarious source of income, and ceases entirely with failing health or anything of that kind. To give these lessons you will be obliged to be out in all weathers, ill or well, to sit in cold rooms, endure all the torments to be produced by stupid pupils. Well, if you were in some business, you would spend the same time daily in a comfortable, well-

warmed office, you would have proper time for your meals, and you would be in the receipt of a regular certain income, which would be in all probability quite as much as you would be able to make by the scrambling, precarious-life of a professor. Then, when you had finished your business hours, you would be fresh for music in the evening, instead of being worn out by listening to your pupils' bungling attempts all day. Thus, if you really had a talent for music, you would have more chance of maturing and perfecting it.

You must bear in mind that *no* provision whatever is made for the musician in England ; we are not so well off by a long way as Mr. Taylor the grocer, or Mr. Cox the poulterer. It is not long ago X. told me he should be only too happy to find some business-place, to give him a certainty. He is a first-rate man and has had great advantages ; if *he* finds so great a difficulty, how do you propose to do?

Once more, the only professor in Birmingham who makes a really good income is Mr. Charles Flavell ;¹ he teaches every day from early till late ; never has any time for practising, or playing in public, or scarcely even for going to an occasional concert. Yet he is one of the fortunate men of our profession ; should you like that life?

When you see Deichmann, show him this letter, and ask him what the musical profession is " as a

¹ Charles E. Flavell, 1816-1879 ; Professor and pianist in Birmingham ; the teacher, in their early days, of Mr. Franklin Taylor and Miss Fanny Davies.

profession." You have yet seen only the bright side of it, and I wish you to keep that bright side.

Now as to choice of instrument. *If*, and it is very difficult to do, you were in the course of time to be engaged as a first violin at the Opera, Philharmonic Society, Sacred Harmonic Society, and the Festivals, and get the best terms, your income would be about £120 a year. This would never rise, and might at any moment fall; and you would have to work long years to attain it. This is the violin side of the question. The ordinary pay of good violin players in the theatres is from twenty to twenty-five shillings per week; and, if the theatre fails, you are out of an engagement. With the piano and organ, on the contrary, the case is different. If you are accomplished as a musician, and a gentleman in character, you may calculate on working up to an income of £300 or even £400 a year, but *by teaching*.

My advice is to you to go on with the organ and counterpoint specially; keep up the violin and piano. You will never make a decent living from the violin, and you may from the others. But I advise you seriously *not* to take to the musical profession. Write in answer and I will answer your letter again.

Your affectionate brother,
F. EDWARD BACHE.

P.S.—Best remembrances to Deichmann.

And, in a letter to his father on March 4, he says :—

Now between you and me (*i.e.*, not for Walter to hear), I should like him to be able to go to Leipzig (when he leaves school) for two years, and if I can assist in the project I will, and I hope I shall by that time be able.

On March 28 his concert took place in Algiers, and he had a brilliant success. Not only did he win his way by his playing and the delicacy of his touch, but also by the absolute simplicity and charm of his manner, always entirely free from any affectation. This charm appeared, though in different fashion, in Walter later on, who was nothing if not natural.

The local paper, the *Akhbar*, of April 2, 1856, devoted a large space to the criticism of this concert, from which the following is extracted :—

Son concert a été fort brillant, d'une durée convenable, et nous pouvons lui assurer, sans être accusé de camaraderie, qu'il a conquis beaucoup de suffrages, et des meilleurs.

M. Bache n'a pas de longs cheveux, de longues mains et de longs doigts ; il n'a rien d'excentrique dans sa toilette ; il est simple et distingué, son jeu est comme lui ; ce qu'il cherche surtout, c'est la distinction, la finesse, l'expression, ces véritables

qualités de la musique, sans lesquelles la musique n'est que du bruit. Aussi son talent ne s'impose pas ; c'est le rayon de soleil de la fable qui, plus sûrement que le vent impétueux, force le voyageur à se débarrasser de son manteau. M. Bache connaît tous ces tours de force qui consistent à jouer du piano avec la tête ou les pieds et qui nous rappelle toujours les exercices des frères Braquet ; il a le bon goût de ne pas employer ces moyens usés dont l'art véritable n'a pas besoin et qui souvent ne servent qu'à déguiser l'absence d'idée et de sentiment.

Les compositions de M. Bache se distinguent par les mêmes qualités que nous avons signalées dans son talent d'exécutant ; elles ne constituent pas des chefs-d'œuvre, mais bien peu de compositeurs en ont produit au début de leur carrière. Pour nous, nous avons la conviction que M. Bache est appelé à prendre place parmi les bons compositeurs contemporains, lorsque l'âge et l'étude auront donné à son talent la maturité qu'il n'a pas encore. Son *Andante et Rondo Polonaise* est une œuvre bien traitée, écrite pour orchestre et qu'il a dû arranger *en quintette* pour en simplifier l'exécution ; tous les morceaux qu'il a joués encore se font remarquer par une mélodie toujours heureuse et une harmonie simple et variée. Nous croyons cependant que l'avenir de M. Bache n'est pas dans la composition des grandes œuvres symphoniques, et que son talent se prêterait mieux à la production des drames lyriques, pour lesquels il semble posséder des qualités réelles.

TO HIS FATHER.

April 4, 1856,
Hôtel de Paris, Algiers.

DEAR PAPA,

The day after Mr. Dendy and Addyes left, appeared, to my great astonishment, an article in the principal Algiers paper about me, hoping I would give a concert, and saying they would apply to my Consul to prevent my leaving till I had done so. I wish I had a copy to send you, as it was so very pleasantly and nicely written. . . .

The concert knocked me up a little, owing to the enormous quantity of preliminary formalities to be gone through with the authorities of the town, before one can get an authorization to give a concert; it took place six days ago, and I have done nothing at all but amuse myself and write my letters since, and am now quite well again.

My plans are to stay here three or four weeks longer, then go into the country for a few days' run, and then to Paris about the second week in May. My reason for going to Paris is that I wish to strike while the iron is hot, and make a little beginning in France. I shall have first-rate introductions from here, as you may imagine. I purpose staying two or three months in Paris, and then going to Leipzig, where I wish to winter if I am safe in so doing. I will have advice on that point. . . .

I wish now to urge again my wishes for Walter. As far as I see, he has a false notion of the musical profession, and I cannot tell, placed as he is,

whether his feeling is a love for the art itself, or a wish for the notoriety he would hope to get by it. In the latter case the sooner he is disabused of the feeling the better, and nothing could be more conducive to that end than what I am going to propose to you. In his last letter to me he asked me, quite innocently, how long I thought it would take him to get a name, like mine, for instance; of course this is a wrong feeling. If however he be a true artist, what I am going to propose will be much better than the life he is now leading, in which he is not making progress, as it is distasteful to him. If he be placed in a position to study quietly and without excitement (of notoriety, etc.), a year will determine whether it be the real thing or not, and he will learn to be a man and know himself.

I propose then that he go to Leipzig next autumn and enter the Conservatory. He will learn, in addition to music, German, and perfect himself in French, and begin Italian if he likes. That quiet, hard-working German life will soon find him out if he is *not* a true artist, and will dispose him to settle down into business in England hereafter; if he be a *true artist*, not an instant ought to be lost in removing him from his present false impressions. As to money matters, his yearly expenses will be £80 or £90, of which I *undertake to pay half*. By my next letter I shall know the exact receipts of my concert here, and will put them at once at your disposition for this purpose. They may be even £25; I cannot

yet tell exactly. When I go from Paris to Leipzig, I could take him and locate him in some pleasant family there, where he would be cared for and made happy. . . .

Let me know as soon as possible what you think of this. In the meantime urge him to get on with his German and French, and with his organ playing and harmony lessons. In Leipzig he would not have much chance of organ playing.

V

PARIS—LEIPZIG

1856

BY the end of April the weather naturally drove Edward Bache from Algiers. He went straight to Paris, where it was his hope to obtain a footing with a view to future publications, etc. He writes thence :—

TO HIS FATHER.

3, Rue de Choiseul, Paris,
May 9, 1856.

I am now comfortably settled, and can write you more at ease. I do not wish nor intend to stop more than six weeks or so in Paris, my sole object being to make a little beginning now, to be of future use, which I am enabled to do by the excellent letters of introduction I have brought from Algiers. From here, I shall go into Germany; Mr. Kistner has written to me, and wishes more of my compositions. For next winter I shall of course be content to go South again, if it be deemed neces-

sary, though I should have preferred wintering in Germany. However I shall follow Mr. Aikin's¹ advice.

Now I want to turn to another subject. You appear to look forward to my some time or other returning to England, and resuming the career and life I have now been obliged to leave. Nothing can be further from my wishes or intentions. I have always wished to be an *artist*, not a *professor*, and have only played an organ and given lessons because it was absolutely necessary to live. All this time however I have been getting older and more known; and I really hope I shall for the future be able to do without teaching, and live by my writings, all the more so that I hope soon to get my price on the Continent as well as in England.

The common saying that England is no place for artists is too true. If a composer or executant have already arrived at the very top of glory and reputation, then he comes to England to make money for a year or so; but no young artist has ever grown up and ripened into a respectable maturity in England. I feel every day the bad influences English life has already exerted on me as an artist, and I am only too glad to get out of them. I hope to come to England from time to time to give concerts and try to do as much as I can in that way; but, if I can avoid it by any means, I will never return to the professor's career.

¹ His doctor in London.

If Addison renews my engagement and I am also paid in Germany, I shall be already pretty independent ; and then I hope to make something from time to time by concerts.

Now you must not think I am discontented with the way I personally have been treated in England ; on the contrary I have met with kindness which cannot be surpassed on every side ; but, on the other hand, as an artist I have had no chance, and have not been fairly paid. I cannot bring out an opera in England, nor if I could should I get well paid for it. If I had been a Frenchman, I should now be deriving an income of £200 or £300 a year from the theatre, and be secure in it, being *legislated for* and even *represented* in the Senate. We have no musical composers in Parliament. Fancy Sterndale Bennett being elected member for the musical interest in England ! And yet on the Continent it is so.

Somewhat in the same strain he writes the following :—

TO MR. INGRAM.

3, Rue de Choiseul, Paris,
May 31, 1856.

DEAR OLD FOGGY,¹

I shall be very glad to see you, as I have so many things to talk to you about, as my life

¹ His nickname for his friend ; Bache, who was a few years Mr. Ingram's junior, was "Young Scamp."

has been so changed in every way by this illness. In the first place, I lose my engagement at Addison's by not returning to England ; this is a pity, pecuniarily speaking ; but otherwise it will set me free to work on some longer work than I have hitherto had time to do, and I have enough to live upon for eighteen months or two years ; so I intend to trust in Providence for what happens, and do the best I can meanwhile. I could not now well return to England, even if I wanted, as Mr. Aikin orders me most imperatively to pass next winter again in a warm climate, and in fact I feel that it is necessary by certain unmistakable symptoms whenever the weather is at all cold even now. So it may be several years before I see you again (between you and me this, if you please), as I am now determined to do something on the Continent by some means or other, and shall therefore very likely not see England again for many years, on account of the expense of the journey, as I shall have to be very economical, not having Addison's engagement to look to.

I am advised seriously to devote myself to the dramatic career, and it certainly is the one for which I feel myself most fitted ; but people here say I must not do everything ; that I must take *either* to pianoforte playing and composition *or* to the stage, but not to both ; if I take to the theatre now, it will be many years perhaps before I shall be able to support myself ; but if I do ultimately succeed, I shall have a much better position than I could ever otherwise attain.

I saw Schulhoff¹ the other day, he was very friendly ; he said, " You do not sufficiently elaborate your P. F. music ; there are effects in it which belong to the orchestra and not to the piano, and you ought to make them into piano effects." He said my ideas were capital, and that I should easily attain the other by working ; I know I should, but in doing so I should lose the definite clearness which is necessary for opera or oratorio writing.

When you write, give me Deichmann's address ; of course I hope he'll give the concerts and make plenty of money by them, as I am not a *dog in the manger*. Berger is getting on capitally, I am glad to say.

In June he went back to his old quarters at Leipzig. His friends there, especially Mr. Kistner, welcomed him warmly, and he settled down happily for some months. He writes as follows to Mr. Ingram :—

Leipzig,
August, 1856.

DEAR OLD FOGGY,

I am living the most lazy, quiet and regular life in the world here. . . . I am studying Italian like bricks, and hope to have laid a thorough good foundation by the time I go there. Also I have been practising the piano hard, and now play several of Thalberg's "go's

¹ Julius Schulhoff, 1825-1898 ; pianist and composer ; was living in Paris during the same period as Chopin.

in," which I was not previously up to. I have as yet composed nothing, the spirit not having moved me. I spend most of my evenings at Kistner's, who has got a piano in on my account, and it gives him great pleasure I think to hear some music, and I am sure it does me to please him. Also I know the Vogels¹ here, the family of the young African traveller now in Central Africa, so that I am jolly well off for pleasant society. I have not got my old rooms, as they are occupied, but another quite as jolly with my old landlady. . . .

Yours very respectfully,
And at a great distance,
YOUNG SCAMP.

To the same :—

Leipzig,
August 15, 1856.

DEAR GEORGE,

I have seen lately much of old Carl Mayer,² who came over to see Kistner last week.

¹ The late Dr. Vogel was one of the most notable men in Leipzig, and several members of his family highly distinguished themselves later on. His son Edward, the African explorer, went out there in 1854, in the service of the English Government, in search of Barth and Overweg. Dr. Vogel's elder daughter Frau Elise Polko (1823-1899), the authoress, is perhaps best known in England by her writings on Mendelssohn; and the youngest son Hermann is now Astronomer-Royal at Potsdam. At one time there had been negotiations on foot for Bache to live with the Vogels, but unfortunately this project was not carried out.

² Carl Mayer, 1799-1862; pianist, teacher and prolific composer. Pupil of John Field, the "English Chopin," in St. Petersburg.

He made great friends with me, and we made plenty of music (as the Germans say) together. He is perhaps the last in Germany of the Hummel school of piano playing and composition ; his playing is the most delicately perfect I ever heard, and his compositions are very finished, notwithstanding that he has a tremendous facility of production. . . .

The music of the future, of which we met so zealous a disciple in Homburg,¹ is already considered as *passé* in Leipzig. The publishers can't sell the quantity they have already bought, and decline further dealings.

Rubinstein, the Russian pianist, is here, with three new Quintetts, three Sonatas for P. F. with Violin, Viola and Violoncello, and an Oratorio² which he says he has composed for England ; but, as far as I can hear, the publishers won't bite. I think in a year or so will be a good time for simple *musical* music again.

I must conclude, as I wish to write to Broadwoods to express my sorrow at their terrible misfortune.³

Old Fogey, yours,

YOUNG SCAMP.

The following letter is to Mr. Killick Morley, a well-known concert-impresario at Greenwich and Blackheath. Bache had been engaged to play

¹ There is no indication to whom he here refers.

² Probably "Paradise Lost." See "Letters of Franz Liszt," vol. i., pp. 283, 284.

³ A fire at the pianoforte factory.

at one of his concerts more than a year previously, but ere the date arrived had been imperatively ordered abroad by his doctor :—

Leipzig,

August 27, 1856.

DEAR MR. MORLEY,

I was much gratified at receiving your kind letter which showed that the old proverb “ Out of sight, out of mind ” is not always true. I should have been delighted to play at your concert next winter if there were any chance of my returning so soon to England. As it is, however, I do not expect to return for a year or two at all events, and therefore must again decline your kind offer ; but next time I am in England I shall consider I owe you a concert if you think it then worth while to take it out of me. My health is now pretty well restored ; but, as I have now been on two occasions dangerously ill in London, I do not wish to return to a life which has proved so unsuitable for me. I hope now I have done with *teaching*, as that always vexed and worried me so as to make me ill.

Next year I shall probably spend in Italy and study opera composition diligently, after which I shall try to fix myself in Paris, coming over to London for the season every year. My pieces are now making a beginning in Germany, and also in Paris I have found publishers willing to make the experiment with me, so that in two or three more years I hope what I write will be a pretty sufficient

income for my small wants, and I shall at all events always add something to it by concert giving and playing. So much for my plans, with which I would not have troubled you but for the kind interest you showed in your letter. I have not printed anything lately, and shall probably not do so before Christmas, as I am studying hard just now, and am desirous to make an improvement in my next pieces. I do not yet know whether I shall play in Germany this winter; probably I shall, however, if my health continues good.

I am very much obliged for your kind invitation to visit you in Greenwich, which I shall be happy to accept next time I come to England.

The "Leipzig Fair" of those days was an event. Writing to his sister Margaret in September, he says :—

The great fair begins here next week, and for four weeks Leipzig will be like a mad-house. You have no idea of the scene; all nations and all costumes and all languages, *i.e.*, northern ones.

TO MR. FOSTER BARHAM.

Leipzig,

September 15, 1856.

If you were not so old a friend, I should not have used you so hardly in the way of writing to you so seldom, but I have presumed upon your indulgence. However, here goes in answer to your last jolly epistle. . . . My next move will

be for Italy, and I think it will very probably be two or three years before I return to England. I feel more and more how bad a place is England for artistic development, in music, at all events; *money* is the ruin of young artists there, who find teaching, etc., far too profitable to be neglected in favour of continued artistic improvement. Also, supposing a man could arrange his life so as to have a great part of his time free for *art*, he finds no artistic emulation and warmth, which are necessary. Here I *know* that if I can do a good thing it is sure to succeed; in England on the contrary I had to *write down* occasionally, and had no opportunities of improvement. So I think most probably I shall finally settle in Paris, as being the centre of art, and at the same time near London and my English friends. But my next move from here will be to study opera composition one year at least in Italy, and then I shall see clearer what to do afterwards. At all events I wish to avoid the professor's life in London at every cost. . . .

I am very much improved with P. F. playing lately, and am also studying Italian. I have composed not a note for four months, as I am rather in a student mood than a creative or poetical. . . .

About Heller's music I perfectly agree with you; it is dreamy, poetical, beautifully written, and eccentric. Chopin is a genius of the first order, who had only one means of expressing his thoughts, viz., the P. F.; I find his large works

with Orchestra as horrible as his P. F. solo works are beautiful. In this he is below the first rank of great composers.

I have played lately much of Schumann's music, and every successive piece increases my dislike to it *in toto*. He has musical learning enough, but everything is confused, and noisy (the Schumannites say deep), and when you do hear a melody it is not at all original. I admire more and more the much abused Italian school, and wish to devote myself to it, as I consider it the only great and beautiful school. The German school is great and grotesque, the French piquant, but not deep; in the Italian I find the most perfect representation of all I have ever dreamt of as most beautiful. Of course the great German masters are *above School*, though I cannot ever come to admire the latter works of Beethoven, which I believe are the cause of the false direction music has of late taken in Germany; these people imitate Beethoven's occasional mistiness, without his ever present lovely melodies, and former quantity of clear and lucid works.

This letter, though containing such sweeping strictures—which the lapse of time and the strides of music have now relegated to the shelf—yet seems deserving of insertion here, as explaining the direction Bache's aims and hopes took, and showing why he was so devoted to Italian music, and so determined to push on into the traditional land of melody.

He came on the borderland, as it were, between the old and the new. The "Music of the Future" had not yet become the music of the present; the world was still shy of Beethoven in his later periods; and Bache was not by any means alone in his reviling of Schumann and the Berlioz-Liszt-Wagner school. Today therefore, when these latter have become as everyday food to us, it may not be amiss for the younger musicians to read of that time, so near and yet so distant, when things musical were exactly the other way round. Looking back from our present vantage-point, we see how today has been the outcome of yesterday; but looking forward from the time when Bache was writing, it was not so easy to foresee the succession of earthquakes and thunder-storms which were about to clear the musical horizon.

Nor must it be inferred that, had he lived to the present time, he would have held to the opinions he then expressed. They are only given for what they are worth historically, that is, to show the enormous upheaval which the past forty years have seen in musical matters. As a picture of the times when they were written, apart from any biographical interest attaching to them, many of these letters supply a page or so of musical history, with here and there naïve remarks that

are good for all time. For instance, in the remark about the "false direction music had taken"; for *Beethoven* substitute *Wagner*, and it applies today. For who can deny that, just as we had a whole Bodleian Library of sweet trivialities following in the wake of Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words," so we are today being deluged with a British-Museum-full of profundities emanating (though how far away!) from Richard Wagner.

The following sentences show what despairing work at times his profession was to Bache, pulled up as he constantly was by his impaired health :—

TO MR. INGRAM.

Leipzig,

October 7, 1856.

I expect to leave here for Florence or Rome in two or three weeks' time; I did wish to stay the winter if possible here, as in that case I should have played in the Gewandhaus Concerts, and in many other towns in North Germany, and thus made myself known as a writer as well as player. But the late cold weather has shown me that it is impossible; in fact I think I should die if I were to try. So there again are my musical wishes knocked on the head, and just when I was in particularly good trim as regards P. F. playing. My wish is now to settle in Rome or Florence for two or three years, and give a few lessons to live by, and thus be able to pursue my studies quietly

and at the same time keep my health ; I am sick and tired of moving about.

It was in October of this year that he made the acquaintance of Mr. C. A. Barry,¹ the well-known *littérateur* and musical critic. The latter had come to Leipzig in pursuance of his musical studies ; and, having already had a couple of years in Cologne under Ferdinand Hiller,² was to a certain extent "Schumannized" when he and Bache first met. During the month that Edward still remained there, they dined together nearly every day, and had much discussion on the vexed question of the "music of the future." As will be seen from a letter quoted a few pages back, Bache could not go with him on the subject of Schumann ; but, as a set-off against this, he waxed enthusiastic over dear old Bach, whose forty-eight Preludes and Fugues he was ready to pit against anything. The Fugue in D major³



¹ The "C. A. B." of the Richter and Crystal Palace concert programmes.

² Dr. Ferdinand Hiller, 1811-1885, distinguished as composer, conductor, pianist and writer ; first director of the Cologne Conservatorium.

³ See also Part II., p. 294.

he likened to the meeting of some robbers in a cave, where they discussed their plans, very quietly at first, but afterwards uproariously. The argument from this was that it should begin very *piano*, working up to a climax later on.

On quitting Leipzig, Mr. Barry went with him to the station to see him off; and at parting Bache told him he had made a vow that he would not leave Leipzig till he had completed his P. F. Concerto. Mr. Barry writes: "The day before he started he played it to some critics, Rietz¹ taking the orchestral parts on a second piano. Objection was taken to certain passages as being somewhat stale. So he sat up half the night to alter them, and thus kept his vow. I recall that on passing the theatre he looked forward to future triumphs there; for he was contemplating an Opera."

On the eve of leaving Leipzig he writes:—

TO HIS FATHER.

Leipzig,

November 18, 1856.

DEAR PAPA,

At last I have done everything, and am ready to go the day after tomorrow, the 20th. I will write to you on the journey, and as soon as

¹ Julius Rietz, 1812-1877; violoncellist, composer and eminent conductor.

I arrive either in Florence or Rome. If the weather be fine I should like to go viâ Florence, and stay a fortnight and present my numerous letters, amongst which several from friends in Algiers ; but if it be bad, I shall be anxious to get settled as soon as possible in Rome, and shall then go viâ Ancona from Trieste direct. We have now had ice and snow here several days ; I never felt better in my life, but I have taken great care of myself, and have worn my respirator for three weeks. . . . I shall be very sorry to leave Leipzig, because I have some very good friends here, and feel quite at home here ; but in music the place is more and more uncongenial to me.

About Walter, I have but one idea ; and that is, if he makes music his profession, we must have him become a first-rate pianist, and that can best be done from fifteen to eighteen or nineteen years of age. With this, and a little organ playing, he can always get a respectable living when once started, and any success beyond that must depend on himself. The want of mechanical dexterity on an instrument has been *my* greatest drawback ; I began to take to composition so early that my playing suffered.

My wish for Walter would be for him to come at first to Leipzig for two or three years on leaving school. I could arrange for his living in some respectable family for £45 a year (prices are risen since the war here), and he ought to do with £80 a year thus altogether. I believe piano playing is better taught here than anywhere else. In

this I should not be competent to direct him ; but afterwards, when he had attained a first-class mechanism, if he were to come and live with me I could then give him all the assistance he wanted. He would be in good hands here, as I could introduce him to so many friends.

The piano teacher's name here, of whom I think so highly, is Louis Plaidy ;¹ he is almost always successful with his pupils. When this mechanism is once attained, one depends on one's own brains for further development. My misfortune is that I have never had the regular course necessary for this ; and now, of course, it would be waste of time, as I can spend my time better in *composing* than in practising.

This is then my wish for Walter, if it can be realized. If I find myself in Rome in a position to help you, of course I shall do so ; but I cannot yet make any promises, as all is yet uncertainty.

With best love to all at home,

Believe me,

Your very affectionate son,

F. EDWARD BACHE.

He started for Italy on November 20, going by way of Dresden and Vienna. In the former city he saw once more Carl Mayer ; and at Vienna a still greater honour was in store for him, in a

¹ Louis Plaidy, 1810-1874 ; one of the leading Professors at the Leipzig Conservatorium ; especially renowned for his technical teaching.

visit to the veteran Czerny.¹ He writes to his father on November 29 :—

I played today to an old musical patriarch, who has probably in his long life published more music than any man who ever lived. I mean old Carl Czerny, the intimate friend and pupil of Beethoven, Hummel, etc. He was most kind to me, and encouraged me much. He keeps on unceasingly composing ; he could not exist without it, I believe.

The old master, the “Nestor of Piano Composers,” as Mr. Kistner styled him in presenting his autograph letter to the Rev. Samuel Bache a few months later, lost no time in communicating to Mr. Kistner the impression young Bache had made upon him. The following is his letter :—

HERRN JUL. KISTNER IN LEIPZIG.

Wien,

30te November, 1856.

GEEHRTESTER HERR UND FREUND,

Mit wahrer Vergnügen habe ich Herrn Bache kennen gelernt, und Ihr günstiges Urtheil über den interessanten jungen Mann vollkommen bestätigt gefunden. Er ist ein wohlorganisirter Kopf, und—frey von so manchen Extravaganzen

¹ Carl Czerny, 1791-1857 ; pupil and friend of Beethoven ; teacher of Liszt ; excellent pianoforte teacher ; prolific composer, especially of scholastic works.

der neuen Zeit—besitzt er einen gesunden richtigen Sinn für classisch geregelte Form und für natürliche Melodie. Diess fand ich namentlich in seinem Concert, dass er mir mit gewandtem, nach guter Schule gebildetem Spiel vortrug, und in dem auch die Orchesterinstrumentation sehr verständig angewandt ist. Möge nur seine körperliche Gesundheit sich auch recht befestigen; er wird dann der musikalischen Welt gewiss manche Freude machen. Morgen (Montag) wird er schon seine Reise nach Italien antreten, und leid thut es mir, ihn nicht länger bey uns zu sehen. Aber heuer ist hier die Witterung bereits ungewöhnlich streng. Heute (Sonntag) wird ihn unser Ex Bascha Joseph als Cicerone in die Hofcapelle, sodann ins Gesellschaftconcert u.s.w. führen, dass er wenigstens etwas von unsern musikalischen Zuständen erfahre.

CARL CZERNY.

Translation.

TO HERR JUL. KISTNER IN LEIPZIG.

Vienna,

November 30, 1856.

DEAR SIR AND FRIEND,

It is with real pleasure that I have made the acquaintance of Mr. Bache, and found your favourable opinion of the interesting young man fully confirmed. He has a well-balanced mind, and—free from so many extravagances of recent times—he possesses a sound and just appreciation

of accepted classical form and of natural melody. This was especially apparent in his Concerto, which he played me with a skill and execution acquired in a good school, and in which also the orchestral instrumentation is employed with great discretion. If only his bodily health be re-established, he will then assuredly give much pleasure to the world of music. Tomorrow (Monday) he starts on his journey to Italy ; and I am sorry not to see him amongst us longer. But this year the changes of weather are already unusually trying. Today (Sunday) our Ex Bascha Joseph is to be his cicerone, and take him to the *Hofcapelle*, then into the *Gesellschaftconcert*, etc., so that he may at least know something of our musical surroundings.

CARL CZERNY.

A competent critic has remarked that Edward Bache's improvement in pianoforte playing was very noticeable after his return from Algiers, particularly in style : the charm of a bright ingenuous nature, developed by thought and opportunity.



J. Edward Bachus

VI

ROME—ENGLAND—THE END

1856

TO MR. INGRAM.

19, Via del Leone, 1^{mo} piano, Rome,
December 29, 1856.

AS I am now fairly settled here, I do not think I can do better than write to you. When you go up to our house, my father will read you my letters to him, so that I will not write over again what I have there said. As to my journey from Trieste here, by way of Venice, Bologna and Florence, I have very little to tell you, as it was very cold weather all the time, and I had to take the greatest care of myself to avoid falling ill. Even with all my care, I have been laid up ever since my arrival in Rome. . . .

In Trieste I heard two operas of Verdi's at the grand theatre ; the orchestra and chorus are tolerable, and the three principal singers were really excellent, as far as one can judge by hearing only Verdi. The tenor had a magnificent voice, and

knew how to sing *cantabile* well. The prima donna sang elegantly, and not noisily, and phrased her music perfectly. This is the theatre where Ricci is director. You know in Italy the director only *rehearses* the opera ; in the performances there is no conductor ; the *first violin leads*, as used to be the case before Costa's time in London. The result is sometimes a want of precision, very different from German clockwork playing ; however they accompanied at Trieste the delicate parts beautifully.

In Florence the autumn season was just finished, and the Carnival not begun, so I heard no music. Rome is considered a bad town for operas ; there are two opera theatres ; one for grand opera, where Albertini is prima donna this season, and where I have not yet been, but am told the orchestra and chorus are bearable ; the other for comic opera, where I went the other night ; there were two comic basses, who were very amusing indeed, and not bad, but rather coarse after being accustomed to Ronconi and Lablache ; the prima donna, tenor, chorus and orchestra would be hissed at Holder's saloon in Birmingham, so villainous were they. . . .

I heard the vocal music at the Sistine Chapel the other Sunday, and candidly thought it abominable. . . .

I see by the Paris papers that Piccolomini has failed, as I expected she would, being neither actress nor singer of any capability, beyond parts such as Miss Laura Honey would do just as well ;

I think her success, and Albertini's failure, a disgrace to the English public. *Albertini* is considered all over Italy a very great artist. . . .

In Florence and Rome one sees scarcely any Italians, but English, Americans and Germans everywhere. The Italians keep very retired. However, I have caught glimpses occasionally of some of those lovely faces which put all the world to shame.

In Rome he soon had a pleasant circle of friends, which included Miss Cushman, Mme. Ungher-Sabatier, Mrs. Gaskell the authoress, with her daughters, and many others; and the winter would have been a thoroughly congenial one, had it not again been interrupted by failing health. The cold of Italian houses, with their marble floors and absence of fires, chilled him through and through, and a severe attack of illness followed. Barely recovered from this, he was at work again, and in April gave a concert in Rome, which was most successful.

TO MR. INGRAM.

52 Capo le Case, Rome,

April 22, 1857.

My concert is now over; it made *furor* and £60 net for my pocket. My pupils are all going away now, and the season is over; the weather is now beautiful and warm, and I have nice lodgings, so I shall get on splendidly. I shall stay here till

the beginning of June in order to be quiet ; the climate is healthy till the middle of June, so no nonsense on that point. Now I'll tell you all the truth about myself and my health : I have never once spit blood nor had the slightest weakness on my chest since I left England, so there is no danger on that score. I do not believe I have any need of a warm climate more now than years ago. *But*, I suffer from my heart, and shall ever be obliged for my whole life to live quietly ; any exertion gives me palpitation, and, if I cannot at once rest, a kind of cutting pain, I suppose a kind of pleurisy. This is what I suffer from, and shall ever have to guard against ; for this I find lesson-giving the worst thing I can do. I am stout and healthy-looking, only I must avoid violent or over exertion. I am now fatigued with the season, and not so jolly as I was when you saw me in Paris last summer, but rest will set me up again.

Now you and other friends wonder why I worked this season in Rome, when I had money enough to live upon without. For the simple reason that when I arrived here my whole worldly possessions were £150, of which the season here would have swamped £80 at least, leaving me £70 to return to England and begin again utterly without hope. My dear George, I cannot make my career in England ; I hope to come there again and bring the fruits of my labour, and earn money occasionally ; but musical taste is not yet sufficiently advanced in England to make a composer's career possible. We have no opera,

and bad music will sell better than good. I now feel more and more the power (*entre nous*, of course, for others would call this conceited) to please in a certain class of composition. This is then the duty of my life. If I can now hold out a few years more, I shall be in a position to command high prices for good works for the rest of my life ; if I gave in now, I should be obliged to lead again the professor's life, which would kill me in a few months, without my friends again helped me. I do not wish to be helped if I can possibly get on without, but I will never return to the professor's career in England ; I *could not*, it would break my heart.

Now I have really made great success with every step I have taken on the Continent. Besides Kistner, André of Offenbach is now going to take my music, and I shall soon make a start also in Italy. If I chose now to abandon my intention of opera-writing, and devote myself to piano playing and that class of composition, I could *now* make as much money yearly on the Continent, with continually increasing fame, as I could make in England by drudgery without a hope of reputation in the end. This even I do not wish to do ; I wish to keep my piano playing and composition as much in the background as possible, so as to be known afterwards as a composer only.¹ I shall always have them as a resource. . . .

When you see Mrs. —, you can immensely

¹ He probably means as an *opera-composer*.

raise her opinion of me, by telling her that I have known most of the grand English people here this winter, also many foreigners, Ambassadors, etc., without counting playing before the King of Bavaria, who by the way looks an old snob, and Queen Christina of Spain, who is the fattest old lady I ever saw.

One of my best friends here is Mme. Ungher-Sabatier (the Ungher mentioned together with Sontag in Moscheles' life of Beethoven). She is now retired wealthy from a most successful career, chiefly in Italy, where she has been written for by Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Ricci and others. She lives with her husband and daughter in Florence, and I count much upon her advice in my studies, and subsequent help to make a start, as her word goes a long way with impresarii, etc. She also taught Albertini, who is very fond of her.

TO MR. FOSTER BARHAM.

52 Capo le Case, Rome,

May 10, 1857.

I have now enough funds, *with what I earn by my compositions*, to live for two years without doing anything else; so I am now going to carry out my life's dream of studying Italian opera composition. . . .

I do not know whether I shall live to realize my ambition, as I feel already that my constitution is the worse for wear; but I am determined to die in the effort, if I do die. What you say of ambition applies differently to the business man

and to the artist. The business man's success is *riches honestly gained* ; the artist's success is *works done*. . . .

Rome has done my health as much harm as Algiers did good, and whether I shall ever get right again or not, I know not. At present I am obliged to live almost a hermit's life, to keep from being absolutely ill. Don't talk about this ; but my coming to Rome was the greatest possible mistake. The climate here is the coldest (damp, cavernous cold) I have yet felt in my life, and the occasional bursts of hot sun only increase one's constant fever. It may do for rich people who can afford English comforts, but for a poor fellow it is better to stay at home.

The illusory hopes, which had buoyed him up during his remaining time in Rome, were again shattered by another attack of illness on the voyage from Civita Vecchia to Genoa. He now made for home, where his state became more and more serious. Here he remained very quietly until October, when he was again driven to seek the shelter of a milder climate.

Mr. Kistner's failing health had obliged him at this time to try what the baths of Carlsbad would do for him, and the following sentences are extracted from a letter he wrote to Bache about this period :—

Pauline,¹ who brings you her best regards, would be very glad to show you her citchen-progresses, and all attentions for your service. Till now I am very glad that I took the resolution to take she with me, because without a good servant a poor ill man like me could not exist here. Very often the desperation visits me, and under the influence of dreadful pains, and the lost Paradise of health, separated of all my friends, before me the winter time, with all the monotonie of a little town, it is not a wunder to lost the courage. Your fate is a more better. The Isle of Wight must be wonderful, and a State there, with all the English comforts, and the cream of good Society, and fine English beauties, is certainly an more envious loss [lot?] than the mine. But I am glad that I have the conviction that you are better, and so I will content me with my destiny, and beg you only to enjoy you for me in the Italian Singers and music, who are for me for ever “pia desideria.”

God bless you! And I shake your hands.

J. KISTNER.

A few interesting details of Leipzig doings appear in the following from Mr. Kistner to Bache, in November, 1857 :—

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

* * * * *

Jenny Lind Goldschmidt sings here in the Pensions Concert with the greatest success, and

¹ His servant. The letter is transcribed exactly as written.

will sing a second time the 17th December. In the next concert plays Piatti of London, and next month I hope to see here my love, Charlotte Dolby, and E. Pauer¹. . . .

You write so good German, that I have not necessary to write on you in my bad English.

Rubinstein is also here, and played a new Trio in the Quartett, but without success. A new Simphonie was a little better.

Torquay was selected by the doctors to be Edward's headquarters for this winter, and thither he went at the first approach of cold weather, but it was now too late to stay the progress of his fatal disease. It could but be alleviated, not eradicated.

In spite of all drawbacks, he nevertheless succeeded in giving a concert at Torquay in February 1858. The room was crowded, and the concert eminently successful. This was his last appearance in public as an executant. Once again, only, he came before the public, within three weeks of his untimely death.

He had returned to his home, with the returning of Spring, never to quit it again, save for one short journey to London in June to see old friends. The following, written on May 8, reveals the actual state of his health :—

¹ Mr. Ernst Pauer, born in Vienna ; passed most of his life in London, where he was well known as Professor, pianist and composer.

DEAR MR HIPKINS,

I write you a line to let you know that I returned home from Torquay this day (Friday) week. . . .

I cannot give you a very good account of myself; my left lung is entirely gone, and the doctors do not agree whether the right one is touched or not; so I look upon my days as numbered. However it is not *my* doing, and I must submit. . . .

I hope to go abroad again this year, so as to pass next winter in a warm climate. I *may* live many years I believe by taking great care, though any exertion or exposure would do for me at once.

Please remember me most kindly to my friends at 33, Great Pulteney Street, particularly to your brother-in-law,¹ and

Believe me,

Yours most sincerely,

F. EDWARD BACHE.

On July 12 he invited his Birmingham friends to an organ performance by his brother Walter, wishing him to be heard before starting for Leipzig, which he did in the following month.

Yet one more wish remained to be accomplished; one farewell concert, at which his own music might be "heard by all his friends at home, once for all." What would have been his own place as

¹ Mr. Algernon Black, also of Broadwood's; an early and constant friend of Edward and Walter Bache.

pianist was taken, at his express wish, by his friend the late Mr. George Russell, and the concert was given on August 5. The writer of these lines can dimly remember the shrunk and fragile form of the young composer being carried in to be present at this concert, the realization of his great hopes.

To some it must have recalled the last scenes of poor Chopin's tragic life, so touchingly described in Liszt's memoir of him. On August 24 the now longed-for end came.

Dictating his wishes to his father or sister, a few days before his death, he said :—

“Tell Mr. Hipkins I was last at work on a piece for him, till the pen dropped from my fingers.”

“To Mr. Kistner, my best love and God's blessing. May he soon be released too, if he wishes it.”

Five years later, on October 1, 1863, a performance of Mendelssohn's “St. Paul” was given in the “Church of the Messiah,” Birmingham. The interest of the performance centred in its object, which was to raise funds for a memorial window to Edward Bache, to be erected in this, his father's church. Edward's old master and friend, Mr. Stimpson, was the conductor ; Walter Bache, just returned from his musical studies abroad, was the organist ; and the chorus and soloists were culled

chiefly from the ranks of his old friends, with whom, and with Mr. Stimpson, the idea had originated.

A local paper, reporting on this performance, said :—

When on the eve of the Birmingham triennial festival of 1858 we announced the heavy loss musical art had sustained by the death of our young townsman Edward Bache, we certainly did not anticipate that five years would elapse before any public steps were taken to perpetuate the musician's memory and acknowledge his genius.

Perhaps the friends and admirers of the deceased omitted to move in the matter out of motives of delicacy and consideration for the feelings of the bereaved family—perhaps they trusted to the innate genius of the composer to vindicate itself ; but, whatever the cause, it is certain that until Thursday last no combined effort worthy of the object was made to fill that niche in the musical Walhalla which young Bache had earned, with a memorial proportionate to its merits.

And another account contains the following :—

To perpetuate by some material monument the memory of this gifted composer—this Kirke White of musical literature, whose genius, if it cannot rank with the Mendelssohns and Meyer-beers, and other leading luminaries of the musical firmament, must be allowed to “shine like Hesperus among the lesser lights”—was the praise-



worthy object for which some eighty ladies and gentlemen of musical attainments banded together under professional direction last night, and applied themselves to the arduous and difficult task of interpreting Mendelssohn's first great effort at oratorio writing.

The result was a stained-glass window, representing David chasing away the evil spirit by playing before Saul. Above is a St. Cecilia, also a medallion of Bache in profile. Beneath are the words :

"In memory of Francis Edward Bache, born 14th of September, 1833, at Birmingham, died 24th of August, 1858. A friendly tribute to his genius as a musician, and his worth as a man."

The window was designed by Mr. (now Dr.) Sebastian Evans, then of Birmingham, now of London, and executed by Messrs. Chance. A photograph of it is given on the opposite page.

Passing over the more immature and youthful productions, to say nothing of the "pot-boilers" he had to write in order to keep himself in bread-and-butter and shoe-leather, Edward Bache has nevertheless left behind him many gems in a simple form which, coming straight from his own heart, find their way direct to the heart of the hearer.

Amongst these may be mentioned the "Five Characteristic Pieces" (Op. 15), to which allusion has been made on page 51; also the four "Mazurkas de Salon" (Op. 13); both of which have been recently re-issued by the firm of Augener.

"Souvenirs d'Italie" (Op. 19) contain some characteristic reminiscences of the sunny land of the South, while the "Souvenirs de Torquay" (Op. 26) are good teaching pieces. His best published work is undoubtedly his D minor Trio (Op. 25), near which would rank the Concerto of which Czerny spoke so well, and some other unpublished concerted works.

Of his songs, there is one which has made its way into many a répertoire, and which supplies the motto on the title-page of this volume. It is "The Farewell," from "Six Songs" (Op. 16) dedicated to Mme. Livia Frege, the well-known singer in Leipzig, and wife of Hans von Bülow's cousin. After his death were also published, amongst other pieces, the "Barcaruola Veneziana," a bright setting of words by Metastasio; also "Parted," written to Burns's¹ plaintive words "The winter it is past"; and a setting of Moore's ballad, "She is far from the land," regarding which it is curious that it is almost the same as the poet's own setting of his words, which Bache

¹ Ascribed to Burns, though its authenticity is doubtful.

had neither seen nor heard when he wrote his version.

Some thirty years after the events above described, it seems that one of the juvenile prodigies of the day made his appearance at the Birmingham Town Hall. His performance on that occasion evoked the following interesting comments on other child-geniuses :—

One of the Rev. Mr. Lunn's friends (says a correspondent) writes in reference to the paragraph in Tuesday's *Daily Gazette*—"Will you allow me to endorse all your correspondent says about the wonderful precocious musical talent of the Rev. J. R. Lunn, as I had many opportunities of witnessing what he could do, in his father's house at the Sandpits [Birmingham]. And I want to say something about another musical infant genius belonging to Birmingham. I refer to the too soon taken away Francis Edward Bache, who, before he was three years old, used to stand at the pianoforte and pick out concords. He played in the Festival band in 1846, being then only thirteen years of age, and afterwards developed into one of the best composers this country can boast of. His talent, like the Rev. J. R. Lunn's, was God-given ; but neither his parents nor the parents of the now Yorkshire clergyman ever gave way to the temptation of making themselves rich by making slaves of their children."

The following section is devoted to the publication of Edward Bache's letters on the establishment of a permanent orchestra in his native town, an object which he had much at heart, and warmly advocated. They were printed for private circulation, a few years ago, at the request of the executive of the then newly-forming Scottish Orchestral Society, with a short prefatory explanation written by one of their number. His long-cherished idea of "English Opera for English People" seems likely, thanks to the enterprise of some of our leading musicians and the London County Council, to be realized ere long. Should it be started upon a broad enough basis, it will be a glorious inauguration of the twentieth century that places England at last on a level with other countries in this important respect.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN BY THE
LATE F. EDWARD BACHE.

THE following letters were written in 1856 by a young musician, Francis Edward Bache, whose career of exceptional promise was closed by death in 1858 at the early age of twenty-five. The single-minded enthusiasm which, later, made his younger brother, Walter Bache, the self-sacrificing apostle of Liszt, led Edward Bache to advocate the establishment of a permanent orchestra in Birmingham. The letters written with this view were deemed unsuitable for the Journal to which they were offered; and now, after more than a generation, the purpose for which they were written remains unfulfilled. The musicianly, practical, and temperate tone of the letters—now published as they were written, save for the omission of passages having purely local reference—gives them a permanent value which seems to justify their publication at a time when there is a prospect of realizing in the immediate future a

scheme for Scotland similar to that suggested by the young musician for Birmingham.

Both Edward and Walter Bache hold a higher place in the estimation of foreign musicians than has been accorded them in their own country. Had Edward lived, there is no doubt that he would have proved himself a musician of very high rank ; and, had he realized the sketch now published, Orchestral Music would have occupied a superior position in England to that which it now holds.

SIR,

I beg to submit to your approval the following remarks on Music, considered in the light of a recreative amusement for the inhabitants of our hard-working town. I do not wish to enter at all theoretically on the subject, but simply to endeavour to show how good, cheap, and constant musical performances may be rendered accessible, and how, instead of being a rare and expensive enjoyment, they may be made as it were a part of the actual every-day life of the town.

In this my first letter I propose to endeavour to point out the utility of good, cheap, and constant musical performances as a means of recreation. In confining my remarks to music, of course I do not wish in the slightest degree to undervalue the other fine arts, as applied to the same purpose of

popular amusement. On the contrary, I consider their cultivation to be fully as important as that of music ; but, as being a musician myself, I wish to limit my remarks to that subject on which alone they might be worth listening to.

Together with the present demand for educational progress in Birmingham and the neighbourhood it will hardly be denied that there exists another need, almost equally extensive, of better and more refining means of amusement than are at present accessible.

It is scarcely to be expected that after twelve or fourteen hours' hard daily labour a man will always be capable of availing himself of the educational advantages offered by our numerous institutions. He will quite as often stand in need of that which will be to him rather a passive enjoyment than an active exertion of intellect. If this be granted, it follows that, besides providing means of education, measures, as it were supplementary, should at the same time be taken to raise the character of the popular amusements. As with the young child whose character and tastes are almost entirely formed by early surrounding influences, so is it with the grown-up man, who, if accustomed to the constant enjoyment of refined and artistic recreations, will naturally from being a mere passive recipient of gratification soon begin to desire actively, that is, by his own intellectual labour, to extend the sphere of his knowledge and attainments. Thus good amusements, instead of counteracting or

even in any way impeding the beneficial influence of educational institutions, will, on the contrary, lead people to avail themselves more and more of such advantages. This being the case when the sources of recreation are of a high order, the opposite effect is produced by people becoming accustomed to low and inartistic pleasures. It is, in fact, one of the greatest difficulties against which the zealous promoters of popular improvement have to contend, that the amusements of the people are generally of so low an order.

I will now conclude this letter with a slight sketch of the way these things are managed on the Continent, taking for my illustration the town of Leipzig, in Saxony. This town contains between sixty and seventy thousand inhabitants. The average rate of wages is not half what it is in Birmingham, and living is also much cheaper. The orchestral forces of the town consist of the large and complete Concert Orchestra, which has obtained a world-wide renown, and of which Mendelssohn was the conductor for several years; besides three other complete, but smaller orchestras, giving one or two concerts every day in the year at cheap admission. There are, besides, a vast number of bands as large as that at our theatre, which play chiefly dance music, as not being competent to the performance of larger works. These orchestras are all supported by the public, the principle being that of continual performances at cheap prices, whereby people become in the habit of going to a concert for an

hour's lounge, just as in England they go to the gin palaces.

In the summer these concerts are held in the gardens in the environs of the town ; in the winter, of course, they are under cover. The admissions vary from three-half-pence to sixpence. If so much can be done then for music in a town of one-fifth the size of Birmingham, surely we might at all events do a part of what they do. Success would entirely depend upon the fact of such an affair being sufficiently well organized to become a habit and a daily need, as it were, to our population.

I shall now endeavour to show the exact kind of concerts most needed in Birmingham. To come to the point at once, I refer to Orchestral Concerts. The programmes should not necessarily be devoted only to the highest class of music, but should include overtures, selections from operas, and dance music ; in fact, they should consist of such music as is easily appreciable and enjoyable by the general public. Before proceeding further I wish to combat the objections which will probably be raised by many to the fact that I appear to exclude the opera and vocal music in general. In the first place, then, as regards the opera, no one can wish more fervently than I do to have a good and constant opera in our town ; but this is an excessively difficult problem, which has not yet been successfully solved, even in London. The opera is the most expensive of all musical entertainments, the expense being so great

that there is no chance of success unless the theatre be always full at high prices. The statistics of the most celebrated opera-houses abroad show a deficit of from a hundred (in Dresden) to three hundred (in Paris) per cent., which is made up by the Government in the capitals, and by the municipal bodies or private individuals in the other towns. In the second place, as regards vocal music in general, I do not see that we are at all behind-hand, but, on the contrary, I think that we have quite our share of good vocalists ; where our concerts fail is in the instrumental part. If an orchestra could once be organized and kept up in Birmingham, there would be nothing to prevent our singers from availing themselves of its assistance ; whereas at present the vocal music itself suffers from the want of its proper accompaniments. To those who may urge that they care only for vocal music, and do not care for *fiddling* (a generic term often applied to orchestral performances by those who have never heard very good ones), the answer is, that if there were an orchestra they would be able to hear their favourite vocal pieces rendered still more effectively than before. Most of the best vocal music is not originally written with a piano accompaniment, but with an orchestral one, *all the great composers having taken for granted the existence of an orchestra for the performance of their compositions*. Thus it will be seen that the piano and organ are merely make-shift substitutes for an orchestra ; it is not a matter of choice or

preference at all : in the one case the music is performed as originally composed, with all its effects ; in the other case it is not.

Having thus endeavoured to answer these probable objections to the opinion that it is orchestral concerts which are now most needed amongst us, I shall now come to the last point I wish to touch upon under this head, and which seems to me a most important argument in favour of such performances. Good orchestral performances, I fully believe, induce a habit of thought in those who frequent them far superior to that produced by even the best vocal or instrumental solos. The effect of the latter depends very much on the fact of the interest being concentrated on one single performer ; and thus a very poor solo will often obtain more direct marks of approbation than a perfect *ensemble* performance. In the one case the public have a definite and single object for their applause ; in the other they have not. Thus the pleasure produced by solo performances is often rather an excitement of the moment than a quiet and lasting gratification. In the case of orchestral performances then I conceive the contrary to be the case. An orchestra is a collection of individual performers on instruments of different qualities and capabilities, to each of which has been allotted, by the master hand of the composer, certain tones and phrases, which, although of incomplete interest if heard separately, yet in combination form a perfect and harmonious whole. These

different qualities of the different instruments are then to the composer what colours are to the painter: the outline in painting corresponding with the melody in music. An orchestral *score* (that is, the arrangement of music for the several instruments) is as complicated and well-adjusted a piece of mechanical contrivance as any of those modern inventions by which a pin or a percussion cap can be completed in a few seconds. Each instrument has its own peculiar function to fulfil at its appointed time; and scoring for an orchestra consists thus in the proper adjustment of the several parts. One great and peculiar benefit then, which seems to me to result from the frequent hearing of good orchestral music, is *that the principles of combination thus illustrated in sound will, by degrees, induce the perception of similar combinations in other departments of thought and of Nature.*

It would be a curious subject for a politician, who at the same time happened to be well informed on the subject of music, to trace the connection between the want of organization in our military and other public undertakings, and the absence from among us of orchestral music. Surely the same causes operate in the one case as in the other.

I now propose to point out the manner in which I conceive the expense incurred by an orchestra might be met.

In the first place, arrangements might be made

for giving in Birmingham at least three evening concerts every week in different localities. For one of these three concerts I should propose an amalgamation with some local chorus. These concerts would thus be rendered infinitely more attractive and varied, and would be enabled to present entire oratorios and other large choral works. Supposing the admission had to be raised to sixpence on account of the additional expense of the orchestra, I nevertheless believe that there is a much larger public for good sixpenny than for bad threepenny performances amongst us. The working class do not care, any more than those above them, for what is cheap and inferior. The thing to be done is to convert the *cheap and inferior* into the *moderately expensive and good*. Thus I would propose to raise the character of these concerts, and make them really worthy of the support of our upper classes. Annual subscription tickets might also be issued at a reduced price, which would probably induce the constant attendance of many of those young men in particular who have really no other means of amusement at present but the saloons and casinos.

For the other two weekly evening concerts I would propose a somewhat lighter class of music, and threepenny admissions.

In the second place, evening concerts might be given either weekly, fortnightly, or even monthly, in some of the neighbouring large towns, such as Wolverhampton, Dudley, Stourbridge. The admissions to these concerts might be either sixpence

or threepence, and subscription tickets might also be issued.

In the third place, arrangements might be made for occasional afternoon promenade concerts during the summer, in such places as our Botanical Gardens, though this would probably be a very small source of income.

In the fourth place, the Town Hall might be thrown open on one morning in every week for a promenade concert at sixpence or a shilling admission, such performances being especially designed for the ladies, who could there meet their friends. This would be also an excellent opportunity for children, who are too young for the late hours of evening concerts, to hear good music. This again would probably be but a small source of income, but still would contribute its mite towards the annual expense of the orchestra.

In the fifth place, the givers of concerts in the neighbouring towns would be very glad of the opportunity of having a good orchestra at a moderate price. At present it is out of the question, on account of the immense expense and difficulty of organization; whereas, supposing they knew that they could have a good and complete orchestra brought to their very doors at a certain fixed and moderate charge, they would probably never give a concert without one.

In the sixth place—and this might become the main source of income, and by itself be almost sufficient to keep up an orchestra in Birmingham

—a series of ten or twelve grand evening concerts of the highest class of music might be given annually in the Town Hall. The success of these would depend more upon the subscription list than upon single admissions, and subscription tickets might be issued for the series at different prices for different parts of the hall. For these concerts engagements might be entered into with the greatest solo artists of the day, both vocal and instrumental. That such concerts can succeed is fully shown by the Gentlemen's Concerts in Manchester, access to which is now practically impossible, owing to there being more would-be-subscribers than the room can accommodate. If this scheme, or something similar to it, were fortunate enough to meet with the liberal support of the neighbouring nobility and gentry, it would alone be almost sufficient for the formation and support of a good orchestra in Birmingham.

Many people will nevertheless be probably still of opinion that this all looks very feasible on paper, but that it cannot possibly be carried out in reality. To these I can only reply that *it is* carried out, and to a very much greater extent even than what I have proposed, in towns of one-fifth of the size of Birmingham. As I have already mentioned, Leipzig, in Saxony, with a population of 60,000 to 70,000, has at least twice the number of musical performances I have ventured to propose for our town of 300,000 inhabitants. I believe that, after all, *more money* is spent on music in England than in any other country, though with less result ;

and that, in order to obtain a more satisfactory and artistic result, we need a better organization and application of means, rather than an increased expenditure.

In conclusion, I will endeavour to point out the causes of the want of orchestral music amongst us, and to show how these causes might perhaps in some degree be capable of being removed. The success of orchestral music depends upon proper organization ; and a collection of individual performers, however good, on different instruments, does not of necessity form an orchestra, any more than a regiment can be composed of a heterogeneous assemblage of undrilled recruits. It will probably here be urged that the want of organization is the fault of the English musical professors themselves—that they have themselves only to blame for the deficiency. This may be partly, though it certainly is not altogether, true ; and I conceive the true reason depends more upon the political and municipal constitution of the English nation than upon any lack of talent or enterprise among its musical professors. On the Continent the highest individual talent is generally to be found in the service of the Government. There is comparatively small scope for individuals who wish to succeed in great commercial or mechanical undertakings. The consequence is that people's attention is there more turned to education and the arts in general ; and to foster and encourage these is, in fact, part of the system

of Government. In England, on the contrary, so great is the facility offered to individual enterprise and speculation, that we rarely find the highest talent in any department in the immediate service and pay of Government. Still less do we find any inducement for young men, commencing the world with a small capital, to devote their talents to the career of an artist, whether musician or painter. Such young men will naturally prefer to sow their capital and apply their energies in a field where there is a much greater chance of their reaping an abundant harvest. The consequence is that, among artists in general and musicians in particular, there are very few (I might even say none, in reference to English musicians) who have any independent fortune or means whatever at the commencement of their career. The difference between the profession of music and the other learned professions of law, physic, and the Church, is that the latter are necessary, whereas the former is not. Let a man once attain a good position as a lawyer or medical man, and he is pretty sure of a respectable income as long as he is able to continue his profession. Widely different is the career of the professor of music, who, after in many cases going through as long and expensive an education as the medical man or lawyer, is liable at any moment to be entirely thrown out by the caprice of fashion, or by various causes which do not affect the others. These changes of fashion are for the professor of music exactly what changes of government, of the constitution of the

country, and of examination tests, would be for the other professions. The result of this state of things is that the average rate of income among English musicians is barely enough for their immediate wants, instances thus being excessively rare of a competence, much more a fortune, being attained. Of course, in saying this I must be specially understood not to allude to the scandalously exorbitant terms paid in England, and in England only, to a few foreign singers. In this particular, we have the satisfaction of having been and of still being the laughing-stock of all Continental nations. Even so far back as the time of Mozart's boyhood, about eighty or ninety years ago, it was a well understood thing among foreign artists, that the English public were to be first gulled by the pretence of giving charitable concerts, and then plundered to the utmost extent by the generous givers of these same charitable concerts, which have always been found to be the most certain, and in fact almost the only, musical entrance to John Bull's treasure-chambers. Thus we find Mozart's father, in a letter still extant, scheming for his son to give, as a commencement, a charitable concert in London, on the occasion of his visit to England when still quite a child. The recent affair of Mademoiselle Johanna Wagner has also taught us that "English are only to be valued for their money." But to return to my subject. Instances are, as I have shown above, very rare of musicians having any capital whatever, whether inherited or accumulated.

Now in order for a number of individuals to enter into any speculation whatsoever, the first and most necessary condition of success is the possession of sufficient funds to enable them to live till this speculation can be supposed to begin to answer.

Well, to apply this to music. The *Orchestral Union* was composed of the first instrumentalists of the day—of the men, in fact, in receipt of the largest incomes—of the men who, if any in the whole musical profession, might be supposed to be the very ones in tolerably easy circumstances. Their first tour through the provinces was fairly successful in establishing their reputation, though, as being a new thing, it naturally did not pay well. Well, just when their reputation *was* made, and they had only to make another tour to reap the pecuniary benefits, they were obliged to give it up for want of finances. Now if any capitalist who knew anything about musical matters had stepped forward at this juncture and bought them up (so to speak), he would have reaped the advantage of their past year's loss of money and gain of reputation, and would most probably have found himself embarked in a most profitable speculation.

Thus then I have endeavoured to show that some certainty, in the shape either of individual capital or of a fixed engagement, is absolutely necessary for the formation and maintenance of an orchestral body. Without this certainty, however small it may be, an orchestra must of necessity,

owing to the limited means of the musical profession, become speedily disorganized. Imagine the condition of a regiment of soldiers suddenly deprived of their commissariat and paymaster, and left to shift for themselves : this regiment would very speedily be resolved into the individuals composing it, and would, in fact, cease to be a united body at all. In case the regiment were one of rich volunteers, the result might be otherwise ; but, as I have stated above, our musical regiments or orchestras are not and cannot be composed of wealthy individuals, for the simple reason that there are none such in the profession. On the other hand, our most successful musical undertakings in England are carried on either by wealthy capitalists, or by fixed engagements offering something like a certainty. For instance, the Royal Italian Opera in London is now in the hands of a capitalist of great business talent and energy, who makes it pay ; whereas, under a former management, £100,000 were squandered in the incredibly short space of two or three seasons. The Philharmonic Concerts in London have stood their ground so long because of their full subscription list. Withdraw this certainty, and the Society would immediately fall to the ground.

To come again to the question of music in Birmingham, I have purposely avoided saying anything about applying to our Town Council for assistance in the matter, feeling convinced that at present such a proposition would be at variance

with English feelings. On the Continent the development of education and the fine arts forms part of the business of the municipal bodies; whereas in England their functions are principally comprised in discussing water and gas rates, drainage, and prison and workhouse regulations. In England we are in too great a habit of legislating for only an abnormal or negative state of society; whereas, by giving some little attention to fostering the good which is, we should be spared much time wasted on correcting the evil. The only way in which any such plan of orchestral music as I have endeavoured to set forth in my previous letters could be worked in Birmingham would be by its being vigorously and zealously taken up by those who have the thing really at heart, and who, having made use of their English individual liberty and enterprise to amass either competence or fortune in commerce or manufacture, should now feel themselves bound, as it were by conscience, to lend a helping hand to those to whom this very facility, offered to the others, has proved the greatest obstacle in their path.

As music now forms a part of the education of almost all young ladies in England, a few words on this subject may not be amiss. The greatest difficulty which a conscientious professor has to encounter with his pupils is, that they have no opportunity of hearing music well and frequently performed. Where a talent for music already exists in a pupil, it will be fostered and developed by such opportunities; even where it does not

originally exist, a taste and love for the art may be inspired. How different is the case now! The exertions of the most conscientious professor are to a great extent of no avail; he can but teach his pupils to play or sing certain notes, and has no possible means of inspiring them with a real feeling for what they sing or play. It is much the same case as if a drawing master were expected to teach his art to pupils who were never permitted to see a finished work of any kind; of necessity the lessons can be but a mechanical drudgery, and, except in some few cases, a great sacrifice of time which might be better employed. When one does meet with real musical talent, capable of giving pleasure instead of pain to the listeners, it will always be found upon inquiry that such talent has been to the full as much assisted in its development by frequently hearing good performances as by merely receiving professors' lessons. Let me be clearly understood not in any way to underestimate the value of good lessons; they are necessary, but their value will be infinitely enhanced when once a real taste and feeling for music has been inspired by hearing really good performances. The task of the professor then becomes one of guidance and assistance: at present all he *can* do is to teach his pupils to repeat certain notes in a parrot-like manner, which is about as artistic a proceeding as if a foreigner not understanding a word of English were deliberately to learn off by heart one of Shakespeare's plays. Thus the establishment of good orchestral concerts

would be of the highest possible advantage in the musical education of those whose playing is now oftener an annoyance than a pleasure to many of their hearers.

Let me, in the last place, just touch upon the advantages that would be offered to our English composers by the establishment of an orchestra amongst us. There are scarcely any concerts where they can have a new work not only *played*, but, what is of quite as much importance, *fairly judged*. The consequence is that a composer cannot make a reputation in England. There are only two classes who can succeed amongst us : these are, first, composers who have already made a European renown, and are at last crowned, as it were, by a grand performance of their works at our Opera or Festivals ; and, second, charlatans who simply amuse the public for a time, but have no influence on art, properly considered. We have at this present time more talent among English Composers than is dreamt of by the public, but which is obliged to lie dormant for want of encouragement.

F. EDWARD BACHE.

A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL PUBLISHED WORKS OF FRANCIS EDWARD BACHE.

	<i>Publisher.</i>
Op. 1. Moments de Récréation ; Three Impromptus	Ashdown.
Op. 2. Rêve d'Amour. To R. S. Pratten ...	"
Op. 3. La Belle Capricieuse. To Sterndale Bennett	Augener.
Op. 4. Rêverie du Soir. To Sterndale Bennett	Ashdown.
Op. 5. L'Irresistible. Galop di Bravura ...	"
Op. 6. L'Esprit de la Danse ; Valse Brillante	"
Op. 7. No. 1. Fantasia on Bonnie Dundee ...	"
" 2. " Those Evening Bells	"
" 3. " Non più mesta ...	Augener.
" 4. " A Russian Air ...	Ashdown.
Op. 8. Eugénie ; Mazurka de Salon ...	Augener.
Op. 9. Brilliant Polonaise. To the Marchioness of Downshire (with unpublished orchestral accompaniments) ...	Ashdown.
Op. 10. Allegretto Grazioso. To Charles E. Flavell Hopwood and Crew.	
Op. 11. Le Carnaval de Venise. Duet ...	Ashdown.
Op. 12. Two Romances. To Francesco Berger	"
Op. 13. Four Mazurkas de Salon. To E. A. Kelly	{ Ashdown. Augener.
Op. 14. Two Characteristic Reveries ...	Ashdown.
No. 1. The Last Rose of Summer.	
" 2. The Harp that once thro' Tara's Halls.	
Op. 15. Five Characteristic Pieces. To George Ingram	{ Ashdown. Augener.
No. 1. Drinking Song.	
" 2. Beloved.	
" 3. Forsaken.	
" 4. Barcarole.	
" 5. Village Merrymaking.	

- Publisher.*
- Op. 16. Six Songs. To Mme. Livia Frege ... Ashdown.
- No. 1. Springtide Faith.
- „ 2. Her Spirit.
- „ 3. Chloe.
- „ 4. Farewell. ("Fare thee well, dear heart.")
- „ 5. Ah, did they but know.
- „ 6. Serenade.
- Op. 17. Two Polkas de Salon ... Ashdown.
- No. 1. To Horace Chase
- „ 2. To Mlle. Elizabeth Kistner
- Op. 19. Souvenirs d'Italie ... Ashdown.
- No. 1. Toujours Gai. To Mrs. Coates
- „ 2. Madeleine. To Miss Bell
- „ 3. Bon Matin.
- „ 4. Sur les Lagunes. To Mlle. Hoskier
- „ 5. L'Allégresse. To Signora Ricci
- „ 6. Rêve d'une Villageoise. To Signora Buti
- „ 7. Dors, mon Enfant. To George Ingram
- „ 8. Fête Napolitaine. To Lady Henrietta Morant
- Op. 20. Les Clochettes du Traineau. To M. Guillaume Kuhe ... Ashdown.
- Op. 21. Romance for P.F. and Violoncello (or Augener. Violin). To Pietro Costaggini ... { A. Hatzfeld.
- Op. 23. Feu Follet. To Miss Arabella Goddard Ashdown.
- Op. 24. La Penserosa e l' Allegra. To Miss Jackson ... Ashdown.
- Op. 26. Souvenirs de Torquay ... "
- No. 1. L'Invitation. To Mlle. Elizabeth Kistner
- „ 2. Prière de jeune Fille.
- „ 3. Mélodie Étude. To Sir Vere de Vere
- „ 4. Les quatre Voleurs.
- „ 5. La Légèreté. To Alfred G. Barham

	<i>Publisher.</i>
Fairy Lilian. To Mme. Husson	Ashdown.
En Avant; Fanfare militaire	"
Sur le Boulevard; Marche Parisienne. Duet. Also Solo	"
The Farewell. Song. To Mrs. Henry Ames { ("Go where you will")	Ashdown. Augener.
Childhood's Joy. Song. To G. B. Arnold ...	Ashdown.
Overture to William Tell. Duet	"
Potpourri on Lucia di Lammermoor. Duet.	
Oesten's Fantasia on Lucrezia Borgia. Duet ...	Ashdown.
Five favourite Airs from Il Trovatore, with Flute accompaniment <i>ad lib.</i>	
Four Songs. To Mrs. Henry Ames	
No. 1. The Absent.	
" 2. Friendship in Sorrow.	
" 3. Parting	Ashdown.
" 4. The Invitation	"
Wandrer's Nachtlied. Song. To Miss Dolby ...	Augener.

POSTHUMOUS PUBLICATIONS.

Romance for "You Two." Flute and P.F. To James Mathews and George Ingram	Birmingham; Harrison.
Litany. Song. To the Rev. Samuel Bache ...	Evans.
Introduction and Allegro, in No. 21	} of Stimpson's Organist's Standard Library.
A short Voluntary (A minor), in No. 22	
A short Voluntary (E Major), in No. 24	
Op. 25. Trio pour P.F., Violon et Violoncelle. To Mme. Arabella Davison Goddard	Leipzig; Fr. Kistner.
Barcaruola Veneziana. Song. Words by Metas- tasio	Ashdown.
Consolation; Mélodie étude	"
Parted. Song. ("The winter it is past") ...	"
Second Romance for P.F. and Violin (or Flute or Violoncello). To H. Weist Hill ...	Hatzfeld.
Ballad in the Irish style. ("She is far from the land."—MOORE.) To Mrs. A. A. Fletcher	Leonard and Co.



WALTER BACHE AS A CHILD

From a Pencil Drawing by his Aunt, Miss Higginson

PART II

WALTER BACHE

1858

“Perseverance, dear my lord,
Keeps honour bright : to have done, is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery.”

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

THERE is a picture, an engraving, entitled
“The Two Leonoras.” I think it is little
known, and rarely met with. It represents the
two heroines of Goethe’s “Tasso” — Leonora
d’Este and Leonora Sanvitale—conversing to-
gether. A greater contrast than that between the
two figures could not be imagined. The one
Leonora is dark, serious, with deeply thoughtful
eyes ; the other fair as the morn, all brimming
over with brightness.

“Wohl ist sie schön, die Welt ! an ihrer Weite
Bewegt sich so viel Gutes hin und her,”

she says ; and the whole light form seems to cry, "Hold me not back, but let me go forth!"

Such, to my mind, is a picture of the two brothers I am endeavouring here to describe. The depth of a beautiful, bright, yet withal saddened, nature looked out from Edward's eyes ; the sparkle of happiness and the mere *joy of living* shone in Walter's face, at the time when I propose to start with him on his journey through these pages. His childhood had not been distinguished by any of those special gifts which had marked Edward Bache even from his babyhood. An immense love of fun, an aptness for getting his own way, and an insatiable love of good-natured teasing (the little ones especially), with a manner so irresistibly joyous and mischievous that it was difficult for his elders to scold him without a smile ; not particularly industrious, not particularly earnest ; such—at the end of his schooldays—was the lad who became afterwards one of the most serious and pertinacious musicians of his day.

His boyhood's years, then, may be dismissed in a few words, up to the time when, having definitely decided to embrace the same vocation as Edward, he was leaving school and about to enter upon it.

He was born on June 19, 1842 ; and, after the preliminary musical teaching obtained during his school years, he started to begin his real career

early in August, 1858. His father had himself intended to take him to Leipzig, but the precarious condition of his son Edward rendered it impossible for him to leave home; and the light-hearted, careless, happy-going lad was entrusted to the care of friends who were just then going to Germany.

After a preliminary taste of opera in London with his friend Mr. Deichmann ("Don Giovanni" at Covent Garden, and the "Barber of Seville" with Alboni and Belletti at Her Majesty's), he started for Leipzig, where he was to be housed at Fräulein Lehmann's, his brother's old quarters.

The great affection in which Edward Bache was held had naturally smoothed the path for Walter; and the old friend Mr. Kistner was as good to the younger brother as he had been to the elder.

Leipzig had not, to all appearance, radically changed by this time, but its halcyon days were over; and, with the rise and progress of so many other great musical centres in Germany, those halcyon days will probably never return. Much goes with the man of the day; and just as, in the forties, Mendelssohn was this *par excellence*, so, later on, it was to Bülow, to Mme. Schumann, and above all to Liszt, that the musical aspirant betook himself. Some of the older Leipzig pedagogues were becoming, possibly, just a little bit

fossilized; they tacked on to the tail of Beethoven, of Czerny, of Mendelssohn, whereas meanwhile a new gospel was beginning to be preached, which they looked upon as dangerous and visionary. But not into the mind of a boy of sixteen did these thoughts enter; he was at present occupied with the giant task of bringing up stubborn fingers in the way they should go, and Plaidy and Czerny claimed all his attention.

A letter home on October 8 contains the following:—

There is a new pupil here from the Royal Academy, named Sullivan,¹ whom I like very much. He cannot play well, but he has written some things which I think show great talent. My examination was an awful thing, for I had to play to Hauptmann, who is the greatest contrapuntist in the world, to David,² the man for whom Mendelssohn wrote his violin Concerto, and to Moscheles;³ however I came off all right.

Speaking of one of the traditional Professors there, he said:—

¹ Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan, 1842-1900. He and Bache were much together during their student days in Leipzig.

² Ferdinand David, 1810-1873; one of the most influential violinists and teachers in Germany; among his most eminent pupils are Joachim and Wilhelmj.

³ Ignaz Moscheles, 1794-1870; a distinguished pianist and virtuoso of his day, and one of the foremost Professors at the Leipzig Conservatorium when it was first started.

He is quite an old man now : his lessons do not do any good at all, and I think they only keep him because his name looks well in the prospectuses.

In December he had the pleasure of seeing and hearing the great singer Mme. Viardot-Garcia. He wrote :—

Mme. Garcia is now in Leipzig. She sang last Thursday in the Gewandhaus. She sang beautifully and had great success ; she sang two Mazurkas of Chopin's which she had arranged herself ; it was one of the most beautiful things I ever heard. Last night she sang to the pupils at the Conservatory, but unfortunately I was not there. Next Thursday she will sing again in the Gewandhaus ; tonight she will sing Donna Anna in "Don Giovanni," and on Tuesday she will sing in Bellini's "Norma." Howard and I are going to hear "Don Giovanni" tonight. I hope some of you will manage to hear Wieniawski the Polish violinist, who will play at Jullien's concert. He is not known in England, but he has a great reputation all over Germany as the most wonderful and brilliant player living. Everybody talks a great deal about him here. . . .

P.S. Moscheles invited me to his house tomorrow to see Mme. Garcia.

II

LEIPZIG (*continued*)

1859

THE New Year opened happily, and on January 3 he writes home:—

MY VERY DEAR PAPA,

. . . Now to business (as Richard III. remarked when he killed the babies). . . Last Saturday, January 1, Joachim played the Concerto of Beethoven's in the Gewandhaus. Then we had two beautiful things for Chorus and Orchestra by Mr. Hauptmann; and the second part of the concert consisted of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which was splendidly played. Last night, as a contrast to the Symphony, I went to hear the "Huguenots," which, with a few exceptions, I did not like at all.

Today we have begun work again in the Conservatory. Mr. Moscheles is in a tremendous good humour with me, because I always bring his edition of the Beethoven Sonatas, and come so regularly. I think he will give me a good testi-



WALTER BACHE AS A YOUTH

(Taken in Leipzig)

monial when I leave. Mr. Kistner continues about the same as usual ; he is very kind to me, as he always was to Edward, and I go now very often to spend the evening with him.

An interesting evening was noted in a letter of February 7 :—

On Tuesday evening Sullivan and I went to Mme. Schunck's, the sister-in-law of Mendelssohn. Schleinitz, the director of the Conservatory, was there with two of his nieces. Also the eldest daughter of Mendelssohn and his son were there. They were all very nice people indeed, and we enjoyed the evening very much ; I think we shall be perhaps invited again before Miss Mendelssohn goes home.

And a month later :—

March 14, 1859.

I have had two dissipations this week, and so I can write you rather a longer letter than usual. On Tuesday was a large party at Mme. Seeburg's, to which, as I told you, I was invited. I happened to hear beforehand that it would be a very grand affair, so that I was not in any predicament about dress. I have been obliged here to set up white ties, which look hideously ugly, but everybody wears them, and so I am obliged to do so. Moscheles and David were there, and Stockhausen, this singer who has been making such tremendous success here. Also Schleinitz the director of the Conservatory, and Mrs. Hauptmann and Miss

Mendelssohn, besides a great many people whom you do not know. It was a very pleasant evening, but rather stiff. . . .

Then Thursday was the 19th Gewandhaus concert . . . then one of the Professors of the Brussels Conservatory, named Dupont, played a Concerto of his own; however I did not much like it. Stockhausen sang for the third time this season, and had most tremendous success. He is going to sing next Friday in the *Abend-Unterhaltung* at the Conservatory. It is really a great advantage for us that, when a great musician comes to Leipzig, he generally plays or sings to the Conservatory pupils. Thus, this winter, we have had Mme. Garcia, Schroeder-Devrient, and this Mr. Dupont.

TO HIS FATHER.

Sunday, May 8, 1859.

I have been this morning to a kind of garden party at Mme. Schunck's. There were a great many people there, including Moscheles, David, Schleinitz, and a good many others; it lasted from 11.30 till about 1. Then they all went away, but Sullivan and I were asked to stop dinner. The two Miss Mendelssohns are now stopping at Mme. Schunck's; the one is about nineteen, the other thirteen; they are just the kind of girls one would like to fancy as Mendelssohn's daughters, and it is wonderful how the elder, who is very beautiful, and very much

sought after in company, on her own account and her father's, should keep so unaffected and kind to her little cousins and everybody else. . . .

We shall most likely have a second public examination this week in the Gewandhaus, because there were more pupils ready than could play in one concert. I expect that a Quartett of Sullivan's, which they rehearsed last night, will be played. It is a very well worked out and well put together thing, and will please the Germans very much. I think it shows a good deal of promise, considering that Sullivan is not yet seventeen. He has had great advantages all his life in London, having been in the Royal Academy and having had lessons of Mr. Bennett.

Bache's¹ first sight of Liszt took place at this time, and little did the young student then think what that name would one day mean to him.

TO HIS FATHER.

May 30.

On Saturday was the second public examination of the Conservatorists, of which I send you the programme. Everything went very well indeed. Liszt and Jaell² were both present, and applauded tremendously. . . .

I am so glad Mr. Flavell is coming in July to

¹ The reader is reminded that "Bache" in Part II. is *Walter*.

² Alfred Jaell, 1832-1882; a pianist of distinction, who began his career as a youthful prodigy.

bring young Taylor ;¹ it will be just what Taylor needs, if only he can stop here long enough.

Bache passed his holidays in Leipzig, making an excursion in July to Halle with his friend Sullivan, Mr. Plaidy and others, for the inauguration of a statue to Handel there. He writes :—

The statue was really very fine ; it stands in the middle of the Market-place ; but the performance of “ Samson ” disappointed us very much, and proved to me what I had heard before, that Handel’s works are nowhere so well performed as in England. . . . Tichatschek, whom we heard as Rienzi in Dresden, sang splendidly ; so did Johanna Wagner, whom I heard for the first time.

The arrival of Franklin Taylor in July, with his master Mr. Flavell, and the fact of his settling down in the same house as Bache, was a great pleasure to the latter. At the same time he wrote home :—

I cannot help telling you, because I feel it so much, how Taylor’s coming has discouraged me ; he is half a year younger, and about three-quarters of a year further on than I am. I believe that, when I have had the same chance as he has had, I shall be able to do as much, but he has had two years under a first-rate piano master, and I only

¹ Mr. Franklin Taylor, the eminent London musical writer and pianist, now Professor at the Royal College of Music.

eleven months ; if I have time for study I don't despair, but, unless one is a genius, one must have that. . . . In October Vieuxtemps, the celebrated violinist and composer, played at the Gewandhaus. He played with the most beautiful taste and feeling ; but, as far as a large full tone is concerned, I don't think he is to be compared to Joachim and some others. . . . I suppose you have heard that Spohr is dead ; they will play Mozart's Requiem in the next Gewandhaus concert in his honour.

This autumn brought him a visit from his father, who had decided that Walter should continue at Leipzig for some time longer.

III

LEIPZIG (*continued*)

1860

WALTER BACHE'S letters home contained frequent mention of a family who have distinguished themselves—the Barnetts. He was especially struck with the playing of the two Miss Barnetts, who had been studying at Leipzig for some time. In a letter home he wrote :—

The two girls really play very well, and have great talent ; in fact they discourage me more than anyone else in Leipzig.

And again :—

Sullivan and I went and had tea at the Barnetts' ! I have been there a good deal lately : they are such kind people, and you can do what you like there.

And in March this year he sent word that John Barnett played on Thursday in the Gewandhaus the Second Concerto of Mendelssohn, and

had great success, being called forward at the end.

An old programme of a students' concert on April 23, 1860, includes the following items:—

Concert für das Pianoforte von L. van Beethoven
(Es dur, erster Satz), gespielt von Fräulein
Rosamunde Barnett aus Cheltenham.

Chaconne für Violine von Seb. Bach, gespielt von
Herrn Carl Rose¹ aus Hamburg.

Recitativ und Cavatine aus Tancred von Rossini,
gesungen von Fräulein Rosamunde Barnett.

Concert für das Pianoforte von F. Chopin (F. moll,
erster Satz), gespielt von Fräulein Clara Bar-
nett aus Cheltenham.

In June the students of the Conservatory arranged an excursion into the country, to which they were going to invite the masters, and have a "real good time," ending up with a dance. Bache, who was full of pride at being "on the committee," wrote:—

Among the amusements there will be played a comic Sextett of Mozart for two violins, viola, contrabass and two horns, which is called the *Bauer Sextett*:² it is very funny indeed, being full

¹ Carl August Nicholas Rose (afterwards known as Carl Rosa), 1843-1889; violinist, but whose chief fame rests on the establishment of the Opera Company that bears his name.

² This appears to be the work entitled "Ein musikalischer Spass." See catalogue of Mozart's works in Grove's Dictionary.

of wrong progressions, etc., etc., and the effect of it is heightened by the performers being dressed in old peasant costume. They are going to rehearse it at my room tomorrow morning, when I suppose we shall kick up an awful row.

Taylor is really a very clever fellow ; last night he gave us an entertainment at Mrs. Barnett's, which he called "Professor Taylor's Two Hours of Magic," consisting of juggling tricks. He has been practising them hard for a long time, and he has brought his sleight of hand to such a point that he might pass for a professional man in the art.

Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors of to-day . . . look on this picture, and on that !

This summer was varied by a visit home during the holidays at the Conservatory ; and in London, on his way back to Leipzig at the beginning of August, he heard "Norma" with Grisi "for the last time, which was one of the most wonderful things I ever heard in my life."¹

TO HIS FATHER.

Leipzig,

Monday, October 22, 1860.

I have begun to have composition lessons of Reinecke,² the conductor of the Gewandhaus

¹ It is not quite clear what is meant here by "for the last time," as Grisi did not retire till 1861.

² Herr Karl Reinecke ; composer, conductor and pianist of distinction.

concerts. . . . I have been working very hard since the examination, but have found it difficult to get everything into the twenty-four hours, because, though I go to bed at proper times, yet I have got up much too late in the mornings. Don't write to blame me for this, because a blowing-up from home is really a very unpleasant thing, coming from such a long distance, and it makes me feel very miserable ; I see the bad effects of it myself, and I must not continue to do it. I am great friends now with a young man who is studying music here, named Asantschewsky;¹ he is of a very rich Russian family, and is studying music in order to be able to carry out his idea of founding a conservatory in St. Petersburg, and has promised me a place as teacher of the piano there : of course this is a very vague prospect, and it is a hundred to one that nothing will ever come of it ; but he looks upon it as settled, and always calls me Professor Bache. However we can talk about this in seven or eight years.

So young Bache went on building his little sand-hills and air-castles. And meanwhile time was stealing on, and the end of his days of probation was at hand. Whatever progress he had made in these preliminary years at Leipzig, it is evident that his mind was still in an embryonic condition as

¹ Michel von Asantschewsky, born at Moscow 1839 ; cultivated musician and composer ; director from 1870 to 1876 of the St. Petersburg Conservatorium. Died 1881.

to what he was really going to be. I have before me a letter written presumably about this time, in which, in one breath, he would like to be an operatic composer, "but of course that is out of the question, because I have no talent"; an opera singer; a Capellmeister!

The little group of which he was one was fast breaking up and going out into the world; but the good-fellowship of student years was kept in the main unbroken.

Mr. Franklin Taylor holds a leading position as a teacher in London; the Barnetts' name, continued by the brother, Mr. Domenico Barnett, has become a household word at Cheltenham, where he is the leading Professor; but Carl Rosa, who made for himself a cosmopolitan reputation through his opera company, and Arthur Sullivan, who reaped laurels and honours from his Queen and country, have both passed away; while Walter Bache's sudden death, thirteen years ago, robbed modern music of the one votary to whom is owing the introduction into this country of the works of Franz Liszt, and to whose persistent advocacy is due the growing interest here felt in them during the past thirty years.

Not very long ago it was reported to me, on the authority of a musician of high standing, who was one of the little Leipzig group just described, that

Bache had been idle and had done nothing but amuse himself at Leipzig. Seeing that his letters of that time were largely composed of fun and frolic, and that he only found his true vocation on finding Liszt, I wrote to the musician in question to know if this were so. His reply so exactly hits off young Bache at that period that it is transcribed here :—

Although I do not remember having made the remark you quote, I think it quite possible that I may have expressed some such opinion. You see in Leipzig nobody was compelled to work, there being no particular supervision ; and there was always plenty to do, in the way of amusement, for the less energetic. As far as my recollection serves, Bache was at that time rather given to working by fits and starts, frequently making excellent resolutions, the effect of which did not last many days.

Anyhow, I think there can be no doubt that it was to his friendship with Liszt that he owed that enthusiasm and power of sustained hard work which distinguished him during his career in London, and which was often the astonishment of those who had known him in earlier days.

Of course, you will not need me to tell you what a universal favourite he was in Leipzig. I don't think I ever heard a single word spoken against him, and I am not sure that I could say as much for any other of my colleagues of those days.

So much for the written word ;—I wish I could equally transcribe here the pictorial presentment, which figured in a certain album of his—albums were then the rage—in which his friend Mr. Kistner drew a coloured caricature of him. A tall, slight figure, with a profusion of light curling hair under a canister hat, a plaid wrapped round him, and in his hand a portfolio with “Trovatore” printed in large letters on it. Evidently that was his love at the time!

An old beggar woman clutches the fringe of his plaid as he is hurrying along, and says :—

“Ach, hörense, mi schönes Herrchen, wie theuer verkoofen Sie denn den Teppich?”¹

¹ Saxon dialect. “Hark ye, my pretty young sir, what will you sell your carpet for?”

IV

ITALY

1861

IT is strange how we overlook the stones which turn, it may be, the whole course of our life's stream! In looking back, long afterwards, we perhaps see that if we had taken the right-hand road, instead of the left, such-and-such things would have happened—whereby the whole course of our career would have been altered.

In September this year young Bache went to Italy—a mere leap in the dark at the time ; for it was not until many years later that he attained any independent position of his own, and everything that he was now attempting was simply with a view to its being useful to him at a somewhat chimerical future period. Yet it was here in Italy that he met his fate, and that, later on, the step was taken which made him the man he eventually became. He settled down in Milan for a few months ; but, failing to find anything to do, he

moved on to Florence early in the following year, having been advised that, owing to the much greater number of English there, he would stand a far better chance. In Milan he had made the acquaintance of Signor Gustave Garcia,¹ which he renewed a few years later in London; also of Marchesi.²

Arrived in Florence, a few extracts from his own letters will best tell of his views, his chances of getting on, and the friends he made.

TO HIS SISTER.

Florence,

March 1, 1862.

MY DEAR MAGGIE,

I have been received with the greatest possible kindness by Mme. Laussot,³ who is really

¹ Mr. Gustave Garcia, son of the renowned Manuel Garcia, and now a Professor at the Royal College of Music.

² Cavaliere Salvatore Marchesi; a celebrated singer and teacher; father of the present distinguished singer Mme. Blanche Marchesi.

³ Mme. Laussot—afterwards Mme. Hillebrand—an English lady who devoted herself heart and soul to the cause of music in Florence. She founded the Musical Society there, called the Società Cherubini, of which she was herself the conductor. She was the intimate friend of all the leading musicians of the day, notably of Liszt, Wagner and Bülow; and she had an absolute genius for discovering the exact worth and capabilities of young musicians. Thus her practical help formed the turning-point in Bache's career, and no less so in that of Signori Sgambati of Rome and Buonamici of Florence. Bache exactly hit the mark when he described her as "the most thorough musician of any lady I ever knew."

one of the best and kindest people I ever met ; I might fill three or four letters with praising her, but could not say half enough. She is also a first-rate musician, and plays the piano capitally. Thanks to her I am already in some very pleasant English society, and have got three lessons a week (Pianoforte) at five francs a lesson, very high terms indeed. She has been also getting me up a harmony class, which I expect will begin next week, and by which I shall make a good deal of money. It is even possible that I may have two classes, as there are too many to put all into one, and that they will each take two lessons a week, in which case I should be set up entirely on my own hook ; but you see I am beginning again to count my chickens before they are hatched, and I ought to know better after so much experience. All this will stop during three or four summer months, but I believe that next winter I shall be able to do very well, if not even brilliantly ; time will show ! . . .

The English here are some of the nicest people I ever met ; I go out almost every evening to visit some of them ; every Thursday is a meeting at Mme. Laussot's for choral singing ; I can only get admittance by pretending to sing bass. Every Sunday evening I am invited to dinner at Mme. Laussot's. You can't think how grand I feel when the landlady calls me Signor Professore and Signor Maestro. . . . My address is now Borgo S.S. Apostoli 1176. You have no idea what a beautiful town this is ; one can't go two

yards without seeing a statue or painting or something else beautiful ; also the weather is delightfully warm. But now I must stop ; this letter is awfully rambling, but I have been at work on my great Harmony treatise till I was quite tired. I have finished the preface, and am just in the middle of the biography of the author.

Two things are apparent in many of the letters of this period : firstly how Bache at the age of twenty, and for some time after, was extremely given to counting his chickens before they were hatched, and indeed at this time few of them were ever hatched at all ; and secondly how his letters are an extraordinary mixture of play and seriousness.

Writing to his brother, March 20, 1862, he says:—

I gave my introduction to Mme. Ungher-Sabatier today ; she was very kind indeed, and said that her niece, who made her *début* at Blumenthal's concert, should take harmony lessons from me next winter ; this summer they are all going to the exhibition in London. . . . Mr. Matthews¹ introduced me to Maglioni today, who gives *matinées* of German music, at some of which I shall play. Mme. Laussot will give a

¹ Mr. and Mrs. Matthews' names are frequently mentioned in his letters home ; Mrs. Matthews is a sister of the late Lord Leighton.

large party on Monday, at which I shall play a duet of Thalberg's on "Norma" for two pianos with her, some variations of Mendelssohn's with violoncello, and a transcription of "Robert, toi que j'aime" by Prudent. . . .

I am expecting Asantschewsky here every day, which will be a great pleasure to me, though I hardly see how I shall get my work done and yet be with him much; but both must be done, so I suppose they will be done somehow.

TO HIS FATHER.

Florence,

May 21, 1862.

I hope you will not be displeased at the step which I am going to take, and which I do entirely at the strong advice of Mme. Laussot—namely, to go to Rome for a month. I have just given my last harmony lesson today; there is nothing more to be done here till the autumn; and the season at Livorno (Leghorn), where I have now decided to go instead of to Lucca, does not begin for a month. Liszt is living at Rome, and Mme. Laussot most strongly advises me to go to him, ask him to hear me play and give me his opinion and advice, and then trust to the chance of his offering to give me lessons. Liszt is without doubt the *greatest pianist*, and the kindness with which he treats all young artists who are really in earnest is proverbial. I do not look upon the advantages of this plan as certain; he may hear me play once, give me his advice and nothing more,

in which case I should stop my month in Rome, practise hard, see the town, and then go to Livorno. He may tell me to come again, and give me three or four lessons during this month. He might even find me something to do, so that I could stop there all the summer ; but this is most improbable, as there are so few people in Rome during the summer. He might tell me to come to him next winter, when (unless in case of war) there would be no doubt at all of my being able to support myself, and I might even make a good deal of money. I can't tell you how it would grieve me to leave Florence ; but still I should do it without a moment's hesitation, for Liszt is without doubt the greatest pianist and piano teacher living, and in every respect a most wonderfully educated musician and man, and the advantage of being with him would be incomparable. . . .

Mme. Laussot (though knowing Liszt well) will not give me any introduction to him ; she says it is much better to go without one, to say who I am and what I want, and she says that she has never known him disappoint anyone, although he has been applied to by people of very inferior ability.

The story, as told to me by Mme. Laussot herself years afterwards, reads like a page out of a novel. When Bache first tried to settle in Florence, she was his very best friend, for her kindnesses were not confined to hospitalities alone, but she possessed that practical English common-sense which

showed young artists how to help themselves. Her power of judgment and discrimination speedily showed her exactly what Bache's character was ; and, endeared as he became to her by his delightful naïveté, ingenuousness and simplicity, she met his too easy-going temperament never by lecturing or scolding, but by seeking a practical way of curing him. Thus, to counteract this tendency, she arranged a harmony or choral class for him some little way out of the town, and fixed it at an early morning hour in order to force him to get up early !

In the more important step of sending him to Liszt, she purposely refrained from giving him any personal introduction, because she wanted Liszt to judge of him *on his own merits alone*, and not to be biassed by any feeling of complaisance towards herself. Even at the last moment she sent her friend Mr. Price—who was to Bache a sort of mentor-friend, being several years older than he—to see him off, in order to be satisfied that he really was safely gone. Mr. Price gave the most amusing description of him and his portmanteau, which he believed did not contain much beyond a pair of white kid gloves. We must not forget also the pistols in case of brigands ; see next letter.

When Bache did call upon Liszt, he was dreadfully hurt because Liszt thought he had come to

borrow money! What an insight it gives into Liszt's life that this should be his first thought when a young stranger came to him.¹

I do not know how it may be with other professions, but with the musical profession I can vouch for it that they are expected to live with their hand in their pocket. Some twenty years after this happened, a musician who was in straits came to Bache literally begging. Bache was hard up for ready money at the time, and offered him £5 (which was the utmost he could do). Oh no, said the man, that would not be the least help; he wanted £20!

A journey by diligence is becoming so much a thing of the past, that I cannot forbear to quote a few sentences about it in the following letter.

TO HIS FATHER.

Rome,

Monday, June 2, 1862.

I arrived here yesterday morning after a journey of five and a half days. . . . I left Florence in a carriage on Tuesday morning; the journey was really very interesting, through some of the most beautiful country of Italy: I found the journey

¹ Mr. Hipkins says: "Walter told me he was so nervous when he first called on Liszt, that he could not articulate a word. Liszt, pitying him, said kindly, 'Brauchen Sie Geld?' (Are you in want of money?)"

rather expensive (about 85 francs), but am really glad to have made it, as in a few years the railway will have put an end to all that kind of travelling. We went by way of Perugia, which is one of the oldest towns of Italy, and near to which there is a splendid lake : previously to starting I spent 25 francs in getting a pair of pistols, for which however there was fortunately no use, except to take an occasional shot at the butterflies, which I invariably missed. . . .

Last night I heard "Roberto il Diavolo" very well performed, with the tenor Tiberini who sang at our theatre after the last Birmingham Festival, and a bass singer, Atry, whom I have heard about twenty times in the same part in Milan, and who is one of the greatest artists living. The pope is evidently afraid of the devil, for the opera is announced as "Roberto di Piccardia," whereas he really came from Normandia ; then instead of the Princess of Arragon we have the Countess of Shetland ! and a good deal more nonsense of the same kind. I shall get my piano today, and go to ascertain my fate with Liszt tomorrow, so that in my next letter I can tell you everything.

On the 6th he sent one brief line to his father, saying :— "Liszt has been very kind indeed to me" ; so the portentous visit had taken place.

Shortly after this he wrote from Leghorn :—

My visit to Rome has been satisfactory in every respect ; I have been strongly encouraged to go

there next winter, and Liszt has told me to come to him and he will give me an occasional lesson : this is the greatest possible advantage I could have.

TO HIS SISTER.

Via Vittorio Emanuele, 29, 5^{mo} piano,
Livorno,

July 25, 1862.

MY DEAR MAGGIE,

Mr. Macbean, the Roman banker, is very kind to me, and has no doubt of my success in Rome ; he can introduce me into the best English society, and I shall have many of Edward's old friends there,—Mr. Goddard, Mr. Perkins, etc., etc., etc. . . . I go out three or four times a week to the Ardenza (a place about three miles from Leghorn, where all the fashionables live, but where I couldn't afford it) to see Price, and the family of the Ritters¹ whom I like very much : they are all going to Rome this winter.

I have made a great rise in the world ; my landlady told me that all her lodgers were leaving because I practised so much, and so she must really beg me to go : so, to avoid the bother of packing up, I took a room up on the fifth story in the same house ; thus I only had to take my things by instalments under my arm and make the ascent : here I can make as much row as I like : my landlady considered herself rather the injured party,

¹ The family of the Ritters is frequently mentioned in the Life and Letters of Bülow ; Alexander and Carl Ritter being two of his closest friends in early days.

because I had told her when I came that I was maestro di musica ; whereas she insisted on it that a maestro could play already, and didn't want to study, and quoted me no end of instances of Leghorn masters who never practised at all.

He was now most anxious to leave Florence out of the question, and return to Rome for the following winter, for the chance of lessons from Liszt. He wrote :—

I hope I have not exaggerated in talking about Liszt ; he won't make me anything wonderful, so that I can come home and set the Thames on fire—not at all, so don't expect it ; *but*—his readings or interpretations are greater and higher than any one else's ; if I can spend some time with him and go through a good deal of music with him, I shall pick up at least a great deal of his ideas ; . . . The two or three lessons I had of him this summer showed me what an immensity I might learn.

So to Rome he went, and there he was fortunate enough to obtain the post of organist to the English church, which was at any rate one step on the ladder of independence. He had good introductions, and soon got into a pleasant circle of friends, old and new : Mr. Macbean the banker ; Mr. Woodward the clergyman of the English church, who had previously known Edward Bache ; Miss Cushman ; the Ritter family ; Miss Hosmer .

and Mr. Gibson the sculptors, and others. On October 11 he wrote :—

I have not yet seen Liszt, though I have called twice, but I shall go again tomorrow; he has lately lost his daughter,¹ which makes him very sad. . . .

Writing on October 22 to Mme. Laussot, he says :—

I have seen Liszt twice for about two minutes each time: he is still very sad indeed, but I can't tell you how kind: he asked after you almost the first thing, and seemed really pleased at the thought of your coming in the spring; today, his birthday, was the second time I saw him, and without my saying a word about it he told me to come on Monday and he would give me a lesson. . . . He says he shall come to the English church some time to hear what I do there. . . . I have suddenly come to a dead stop and can't think of anything else to say: therefore I will do like the concert programmes and make an interval of half an hour, during which I can smoke a cigar and practise the Gradus, and if the spirit does not move me then, I will put on a nice little coda and conclude.——

The Gradus has not given me any new ideas, so I will stop: I only hope that this letter will not find you "down at the mouth" and indisposed

¹ The wife of M. Emile Ollivier.

for letter-writing: you are not obliged to read the *Armonia* every morning at breakfast and the *Osservatore Romano* after dinner, and then to hear the very worst and vulgarest noisy ballet music which ever entered into the thick brain of the very worst and vulgarest noisy Italian *Gassenhauer* composer. So I hope you will write very soon: please do, and give me all the news. I have written to Price already and expect an answer soon: I miss him quite as much as I do you, which is saying a great deal: to be without you both is like having to hobble along without a walking-stick. I greatly fear that this loss combined with that of the dressing-gown is turning my few remaining hairs quite gray; but hair dye and cigars are cheap in Rome, so there will be one sunny side to the case. I have not yet got any pupils, but hope I shall have some very soon.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Rome,

December 14, 1862.

I don't wonder at your being surprised at my silence; but though I have constantly thought of you, I have never felt inclined to write, having nothing good to tell, or rather having so much to make me "grumpy" that the good shrinks into insignificance alongside of it. However I will try to get through a few lines in a tolerably contented spirit. "Sufficient unto the day," etc. (this is the text—here goes for the sermon, which will *not* be divided into three heads). . . .

I have seen a great deal of Liszt, and heard him play several times; also had three lessons. The Ritters have got a piano, and he will go there sometimes and play to them. He gives lessons to Sgambati,¹ a very talented young pianist here, and a particular friend of mine, and also plays Sonatas, etc., with Ramacciotti, a violinist. We are better off for music here than in Florence. Ramacciotti's Quartett concerts begin on Wednesday; I shall play at the second or third one. By-the-by I played Schumann's A Minor Sonata with viola, Mozart's G Major, and Mendelssohn's D Minor Trio (got up in a week) at the German Club, and had great success.

¹ Giovanni Sgambati; Liszt's pupil, now the renowned *virtuoso* in Rome.



G. Liff

V

• ROME (*continued*)

1863

A LETTER home, early in the New Year, contains the following:—

Liszt is very kind and I hear him play often, though I have only had three or four lessons as yet. . . . I have some very good friends among the musicians here, especially Sgambati, the piano player, who is very talented, and one of the nicest fellows I ever knew: also a young violin player, who is a really good fellow, besides being remarkably handsome and—what shall I call it?—fascinating. It is quite as much pleasure to see him and Sgambati play together as to hear them.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Rome,

January 30, 1863.

I was very glad indeed of your most jolly letter, which gave me great pleasure, and which I won't delay any longer answering. Liszt has received

your book-marker, for which he was very much obliged: he intends to write to you soon. Had I written a day sooner, I should have astonished you by the news that he was going to play in public once more; but he sent me a note yesterday, saying that it had come to nothing. The fact was that the Pope and Cardinals had persuaded him to consent to play two P. F. solos in an "Accademia sacra," which was to have taken place in the little church of St. Rosario where he lives. Tickets at two napoleons each were to be sold for the benefit of St. Peter's pence. I don't at all know why it has been given up.

Liszt tells me to say that, if you would like (*i.e.*, unless you have already got) his arrangement of Schubert's *Fantasie* Op. 15 for two pianos, he should be happy to make you a present of it. He arranged the *Fantasie* for P. F. and orchestra (*symphonisch bearbeitet für P. F. und Orchester*), and then arranged the part of the orchestra for a second piano. Sgambati will play it at his concert, and I shall accompany him.

I have as yet not been able to decide anything about my concert, having *nothing* to play (*i.e.*, that I care to play). But I must give one, as it won't do to leave perhaps 100 scudi lying by the roadside when I might just as easily pick them up: as yet I have not a *single piece ready*, but hope by working hard to get the following stunning programme ready in about four weeks:—

Sonate, P. F. and Cello, Chopin; F sharp minor *Fantasie*, Mendelssohn; "Les *Préludes*"; Violin

Variations by David-Pinelli; Nocturne, Schulhoff (very pretty and Italian); and "Les Patineurs," Liszt. I am not very enthusiastic about the Mendelssohn Fantasie, but it is awfully "classical" and will delight the people, besides having some real artistic worth. I should never have dreamed of trying the "Patineurs," which is quite new to me, and which I can no more play than fly, had not Liszt encouraged me to it, and assured me I was quite equal to it. I hope he is right!

While I think of it, *never* again attempt to "mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the Fantasia Cromatica, without getting Bülow's edition of it, Bote and Bock; it is splendid—quite equivalent to having had a lesson on it from Liszt.

I have been obliged to give up going out in the evenings; very stupid, I know, because one loses all one's connections; but the days go so fast, that I assure you that, by stopping at home all the evening, I don't do more than four hours a day. The only exception I make is for balls, which I can't resist, and of which I have had several jolly ones; but I am thankful to have done with being pestered to play on bad pianos and to people who don't care for it (perhaps talk all the time), and then with being thought to "make a fuss of one's self" if one refuses.

It has been remarked to me more than once in Bache's later years what an indomitable resoluteness there was in his character; thus, when he was in the full swing of his twenty years' annual con-

certs, he would say "I mean to play such and such pieces at my next concert," and this perhaps only a few months before the concert, and when he had not touched a single one of them. It sounds like conceit, and in some men it might have been; but he was so entirely free from conceit, and thought so very humbly of himself, in his mature years, that no one could accuse him of this. It was that he set himself such and such a duty to do: it simply had to be done, and where other men would have said "if possible" he said "I must." Though partly inherited from his father, it seemed as if this quality had been acquired from Bülow, who certainly had more influence on him than any man in the world except Liszt; but the above letter shows that, even as a young man of twenty, he was beginning on the same principle.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

February 19.

When are you coming? . . . I hope you will really come soon, and bring all your family with you; and don't come just too late for the Ritters. I have not seen them for a fortnight, and don't know at all how long they stay. I am very sorry that I must stop now, but my candle is smorzandoing and I am bitterly cold; I wonder the ink is not frozen. . . . I think I told you that I played the Rubinstein Trio at Ramacciotti's chamber concerts:

Sgambati played Bach's D Minor Concerto (with accompaniment) last time splendidly. We are really better off here than in Florence. Pinelli,¹ Sgambati and Ramacciotti are three angels, and (the two former especially) play splendidly, especially when they have rehearsed with Liszt. Well good-bye. Please to write soon—very soon, telling me everything, and remember me most particularly to . . .

Believe me, my dear Mme. Laussot,

Yours affectionately,

WALTER BACHE.

Please bring the dressing-gown!

And a week later, to the same friend:—

I have just been hearing Liszt play at the Ritters': he played us several of the "Switzerland" series of his "Années de Pèlerinage": I like them immensely, excepting "William Tell's Chapel," which I could not make much of. Well there is really no use in my writing any more, as I shall see you soon. We are swarmed with concerts here, and almost all have really good programmes. . . . I particularly hope that you will make the acquaintance of Sgambati and Pinelli. Pupils are "partant pour la Syrie," or Naples, or London, but I still have fifteen lessons a week.

Being as usual quite at a loose end as regarded any settled position, he paid a visit home this

¹ Signor Ettore Pinelli, violinist, and one of several gifted brothers who made a reputation in Italy.

summer. On the eve of starting he wrote to Mme. Laussot :—

Rome,

May 15, 1863.

I just write you a line to tell you that I have decided to leave for England, and shall go the day after tomorrow. . . . Liszt is very well, and disgusted with life, and the Ritters are gone to Naples (leaving a large box behind them). Frl. Stein is gone to Ariccia, and I am solus—in your old lodgings. Please not to give my remembrances to Sgambati, and say I don't wish him any success at all. And do please ask him what he means by promising to write, when he has not the slightest earthly intention of keeping his word. Of course I can forgive him this ; but really the fellow has made so many appointments and promises with me this season and broken them all, that if we are to be good friends next year I must cut him. Pinelli and I invited about a hundred of our friends to a musical *Unterhaltung* at Ramacciotti's house on Wednesday: we played Mozart's P.F. Es dur Quartett, Chopin's Cis moll Polonaise, Schubert's Rondo and Wieniawski's Polonaise ; and as the people were not satisfied with that but "asked for more," we forked out Ramacciotti's electric machine and gave all the young ladies shocks ; this made more effect than all the rest put together, and quite made up for the want of cake and ices. Pinelli desires remembrances. I must really stop now, as I am horribly sleepy and out of sorts, and have twenty-

five calls to make tomorrow. I have been hearing "Mosé"¹ five or six times, and have become as italianissimo as ever. Would you tell Sgambati that Ramacciotti is a little better.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Birmingham,

June 19, 1863.

MY DEAR MME. LAUSSOT,

A thousand thanks for your kind letter which I received on my return home about three weeks ago: since then I have had a charming letter from Sgambati, enclosed to me by Mr. Burn Callander,² who has asked me to call upon him in London. I am come of age today—come into all my property. I suppose you will soon leave for the baths of Lucca, but I hope this letter may be in time to catch you before your departure. One thing I wanted to say to you—we talked a great deal about an orchestral concert which you were to give next winter and at which I should play: I merely wanted to mention that in case you should prefer to have Sgambati again, in order that he may renew his Florence acquaintances, I am sure you know me well enough not to stand on ceremony with me: on the other hand I confess that I should enjoy coming above anything, and wish also to get known as much as possible, especially among the English. Perhaps

¹ "Mosé in Egitto," Rossini's Opera.

² Mr. W. T. Burn Callander, a good amateur musician. A friend of Mme. Laussot, and afterwards of the Baches.

I am rather premature in bothering you in June with what comes off perhaps next spring and perhaps never. . . .

I return to Rome at the beginning of October and shall do everything in my power to call in upon you for a day. I fear I shall then be obliged to stop in Italy till I leave it for good, which will probably not be as long as Liszt is there. . . .

My father and sisters would send most particular remembrances, only they don't know I am writing, and it is too much trouble to go and tell them.

Believe me,

Ever your very affectionate "uncle,"¹

W. BACHE.

It was on October 1 this year that the performance of "St. Paul" took place (see p. 101), to obtain funds for the erection of a memorial window to his brother Edward.

Bache took the opportunity of being on the spot to give a Pianoforte Recital in his native town, and already began at this early period to drive in the thin end of that wedge at which he hammered so persistently and consistently all his life, four out of the eleven numbers of his programme being by Liszt. Immediately after this

¹ "Uncle Bache" or "Bachey" became his nickname with Mme. Laussot; she, in her turn, being "Grandmother."

he returned to Rome, whence he writes to his father :—

Via dei Cappuccini, 6, 1^{mo} piano,
Rome,

October 19, 1863.

. . . Since beginning this I have spent one of the most delightful days of my life, and I often wished for some of you to be with me. Liszt has removed to Monte Mario, about two and a half miles from my part of the town : on a high hill, and adjoining or forming part of a beautiful country church ; so my first visit was to him. He was *very very* kind—more than I can tell you. He has removed to this place on purpose to get away from people and live quietly. It is a magnificent country, with a splendid view of Rome, and no houses for miles. But this will make no difference to my visiting him, he said. He is writing a great deal : but he put it aside and took me a beautiful walk, and played me several things (amongst others a Prelude and Fugue of his own for organ—on the name Bach, which I will show Alfred when he has finished what he has already), and ordered dinner on purpose for me ; and so I stopped all day, and have just had a most magnificent walk home—but descriptions of scenery are always stupid and fall so far short of the reality—I wish you could have seen it. He accompanied me part way home, and promised to come and see me tomorrow evening. Liszt desired me to give you his “compliments or kind regards.”

A letter to Mme. Laussot, about the same time, says :—

I enclose you a programme of my recital,¹ which was really a great success : I played my very best, and got splendid critiques and lots of applause, and—better than all—from £12 to £15. I played everything by heart, except the two first pieces. I was so nervous in the beginning. The “St. Paul” performance went off very well, and I got capital critiques in the papers: I had to slave at the Overture for months beforehand, and arrange it expressly for organ from the score: it was very difficult. A very good German organ-builder resident in Rome has put up a large organ for sale in the Palazzo Altieri: I am going to see it tomorrow, and if I like it I intend in a couple of months, when more people are come, to give an organ recital. I should play Liszt’s magnificent Organ Fantasia and Fugue on the chorale from the “Prophète,” a wonderful masterpiece that lasts about three-quarters of an hour; Liszt’s Organ transcription of the “Tannhäuser” Pilger-Chor (just published, and which I have played in England); Mendelssohn’s Sixth Organ Sonata; and an Allegro of my brother’s which will please the Italians. A good programme, *nicht wahr?*

Sgambati is awfully improved: he and Pinelli are really almost angels: I brought Pinelli the Joachim Concerto to study. I spent all day

¹ His recital at Birmingham, and the memorial performance of “St. Paul” there.

yesterday with Liszt at Monte Mario, and enjoyed myself immensely, but have just told my father all about it in a long letter, and so shan't repeat it.

A month later he writes to his father :—

I have heard Liszt play again since I last wrote : he came to my house and played for almost an hour and a half. I must not leave Rome for good, as long as he is here. . . . It is also an immense advantage to have a real friend like Sgambati, who is also a pianist of my own age, and in most respects far above me.

In the middle of December he played at one of the concerts of the German Club, and wrote to his father :—

I had a very great success : the Faust Valse especially I played a great deal better than I ever have before, and Liszt was very much pleased. I must work hard now at a Trio of Schubert's, E Flat, which I am going to play in a fortnight at Ramacciotti's concert.

VI

ROME (*continued*)

1864

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Cappuccini, 6, 1^{mo} piano,
Rome,

January 7, 1864.

I am very busy and have not seen Liszt for some weeks, but must make a push to go out to him in a day or two, as I am going to play Schubert's E Flat Trio and the Sonata Appassionata at Ramacciotti's concert next Thursday, and want to go through them with Liszt. The Trio seems very easy, but has some things that are intensely difficult to play up to the proper time; but I hope I shall manage them. I had a regular triumph at a concert at the German Club three weeks ago, with the Faust Waltz: I played better than my best, and Liszt was very much pleased; also I played the Mendelssohn C Minor Trio with Pinelli and Furino, a capital Neapolitan 'cellist who is come at last to settle at Rome. We have also

had Franchomme¹ here for a few weeks : I heard him play Chopin's Sonate with the Princess Czartoryska,² which was one of the greatest treats I ever had. Sgambati plays even better than last year, and works very hard. I have not heard many pianists whom I care for so much, though I differ from him immensely in my ideas about many pieces. . . . I am expecting my friend Asantschewsky (who has turned out quite a swell composer—*vide Neue Zeitschrift*) here this winter.

Well, I have told you all the news, and hope that you will forgive my past offences, and let me go to bed, lest I should oversleep a lesson or two tomorrow morning.

A letter to his sister contains the following remarks, which show what a ridiculous espionage the Roman police at that time exercised :—

¹ Auguste Joseph Franchomme, 1808-1884; violoncellist; lived in Paris; was very intimate with Chopin, and with him at the time of his death.

² Mr. Hipkins writes : "The Princess Marcelline Czartoryska, a capital pianist, trained by Czerny, became afterwards one of Chopin's best pupils. She gave a P. F. Recital in London in 1855, at the Marquis of Breadalbane's, for the benefit of the Polish Society, tickets 40s. each; and played beautifully. I knew her very well, and have occasionally corresponded with her up to quite recent years. She is lately dead."

Liszt spoke of her as "possessed of a rare and fine understanding, the most charming figure in society, and a kindly and enthusiastic worshipper of Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin; and, above all this, the illuminating faith of the Catholic Church reflected in Polish blood."

I enclose you the programme of Sgambati's concert, which is really first-rate: the Schubert *Fantasie* is one of the grandest things (in Liszt's arrangement) that I ever heard, and he plays it really perfectly. The Tartini *Sonate*, as you know, is called "*Le Trille du Diable*," but the police would not allow the word *diable*!

The piece therefore figured in the programme as "*Le Trille du Follet*." Sgambati and Bache combined their forces in the two-piano arrangement of Liszt's "*Les Préludes*."

His own concert followed on the heels of Sgambati's, and took place on March 5. He and Sgambati repeated the "*Préludes*." Their mutual friend, Ettore Pinelli the violinist, figured at both concerts. The report sent home was that the concert was a success, and that "Liszt was present and was quite satisfied."

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Bagni di Lucca,
August 8, 1864.

My concert takes place this evening. . . . I shall play the "*Patineurs*"—the whole of it for the first time. I am so vexed—I lent my piano—the best here—and the *facchini* have broken something inside it—I don't know what—the piano can't be used—I shall have a wretched H—— instead. . . . Don't you think I am a baby to cry so?

But it doesn't hurt you, and it does me so much good ; I began to write in the depths of grumpiness, and feel quite cheerful now. But now for my good news : I gave my concert last week and played quite my best—had all the swells in the place there (the most stupid public you *ever* saw) ; and though (what with singer, Papini,¹ room, piano, etc., etc.) I had nearly 300 francs expenses ! yet I cleared 140 francs, which is better than nothing. I played Ehlert's² Scherzo pretty well, though I shall do it better in six months—I had only had the music three weeks before the concert : unfortunately the public seemed to think it was a berceuse, for most of them went to sleep, and the rest talked. But I took the Faust Waltz at a stunning rate, and altogether it went jolly, so that the concert ended brilliantly enough.

Somebody at Rome wrote to me the other day, and said something which you may put down in your good-conduct book : “*Les bonnes nouvelles que vous me donnez de Mme. L. me sont fort agréables. J'espère qu'elle me fera le plaisir de revenir à Rome, car je n'entrevois aucune chance d'aller à Florence. Veuillez dire à Mme. L. qu'elle me ferait injure si elle ne me comptait parmi ses adhérens les plus véritablement affectionnés et dévoués. En particulier je lui conserve une reconnaissante mémoire de l'“Ideale” et de*

¹ Mr. Guido Papini, a distinguished violinist ; now Professor at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin.

² Ludwig Ehlert, 1825-1884 ; pianist, composer and musical writer.

tout ce qui s'y attache. Elle est du très petit nombre des nobles et intelligentes exceptions dans le trop grand nombre de mes amis et connaissances. J'en parlais dans ce sens avant-hier à une jeune personne d'origine grecque qui habite Florence (où elle fréquente les concerts de Mme. L.) chez le Comte de Sartiges. L'Athénienne joue du piano à merveille et à ravir."

Allow me to add Amen to this. Liszt is going to Germany in the middle of August for the *Tonkünstler-Versammlung* in Carlsruhe; then to Weimar and Paris, and back to Rome at the beginning of October. . . .

Now I must go and dress for these wretched "Patineurs": how I tremble, oh ~~~~~

Postscript tomorrow.

(After the concert.) I am so disgusted with myself and the public that, instead of stopping for the ball, I have come home to finish my letter. I made no regular mess in the "Patineurs," and did one or two things even piquant and well, but what with that wretched public talking, the keys all wet and sloppy, a bad piano, and my nervousness, the whole thing was "meschino." Even Papini missed a lot of harmonic notes owing to the heat, though he otherwise played well. . . . I don't think I need be discouraged about this evening: even the greatest pianists generally play some *comparatively* easy thing first, or some piece which they have played hundreds of times; whereas I played only one piece, and had no opportunity of

"warming to my work." *Uebrigens* I was much applauded, and don't suppose that even one person noticed anything amiss. . . . Well, now I must go to bed ; I think I have told you everything.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Rome,

October 28, 1864.

I received your long welcome letter, welcome in spite of its awful blowing up, the other day, and lose no time in writing to thank you sincerely.

Who on earth taught you to blow up in such a way? It is quite masterly, and winds up from a small beginning to a climax which is not surpassed by anything in Beethoven. But seriously, I plead guilty to almost everything, and really hope that your letter will do me good, as, with one exception, I deserve everything you say. . . .

Also what do you mean by telling me to "profit by Liszt and Sgambati": I can conscientiously say that since I have been in Rome I have never let slip one opportunity of profiting by Liszt: as for Sgambati, it was impossible to have any music at all with him: he was so dreadfully unpunctual, forgetful, and entirely unreliable. I have wasted so many afternoons in waiting for him that I was obliged to give it up. But thanks to somebody or other (to you perhaps?) he has entirely changed now: thus the only thing which made a coolness between us is removed: we get on stunningly, and have one day in the week when we play to

each other and find fault with each other as much as possible: this is an immense advantage to me.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Rome,

November 9, 1864.

MY VERY DEAR GRANDMOTHER,

Your letter was so jolly, and made me really so happy that I can't help answering it at once. I really hope that it will do me good, as it ought to do, for I perfectly agree with every word of it, and it is just the *kind* of thing my father has often and often told me: but somehow or other one does not profit as one ought to do by what one's father tells one. It is really *wrong*, but I am afraid it is a fact. I intend to give Sgambati and Ravnkilde the benefit of your letter, which I shall keep. . . . Sgambati is really such a *magnificent* player now, that there could be no two opinions about him, except among lunatics. So I hope things will go smoothly with him.

(November 10.) I got so sleepy at this point of my letter last night, that I went to bed. May I whine and grumble for two minutes? I know I am a great baby, who can't bear the least thing without crying, but "'tis my nature to," so please excuse! Do you think, if I work like a nigger, that there will be anything artistically free and poetical in my playing? I now, for the first time, begin to see so clearly my deficiency in this respect that it makes me awfully unhappy. I know that in most things the victory is half won when one

sees one's weakness; but I am not at all sure whether that applies to this case. I know, for instance, lots of musicians who would be quite first-rate if they could only express, or give out, all that they have in them, and I fear that I may perhaps be one of these. If you can *perfectly sincerely and conscientiously* give me a word of encouragement about this, I wish you would. . . .

I know we both agree in thinking that *any other* man [than Liszt] who had been placed in his quite exceptional position would have gone to the devil long ago. I am quite of your opinion that the more one knows him the more one adores him as a man and as a musician. Nothing can ever change him. He is always the same.

Your most affectionate uncle,

W. B.

The following summer season was passed at the Bagni di Lucca, where he gave a successful concert, returning to Rome as soon as the weather was sufficiently cool. Here he soon settled down again for another winter; and when Liszt had returned, and pupils began to come, nothing was wanting to make it a happy and successful season.

Writing to his father on December 14 he says :—

I am in a state of the greatest happiness just now, having had really a great success last night at a concert at the German Club: I played

Mendelssohn's G Minor Concerto and Liszt's Faust Waltz, and feel quite braced up to hard work. I think an occasional success is quite as necessary as an occasional discouragement, in order to keep up one's enthusiasm for work. I hardly see my way through this winter, as I have already sixteen lessons a week, and believe that several people who heard me at this concert will take lessons also: in addition to this, the evening parties have begun in full force, so that it is difficult to know what to do—also I have engaged to play at six matinées given by a violinist: this obliges me to work very hard at getting up pieces (chiefly ensemble pieces) and to attend a great many rehearsals, but it will be excellent in accustoming me to playing in public—the first of the matinées has already taken place and went off pretty well, though nothing extraordinary. The great piece of news is that Asantschewsky has come to spend the winter here: I like him more and more the more I know him; in fact except Price and Mr. Ingram I have no such friend out of our family. . . . Liszt has been here this evening to give us our lesson—I have a sore thumb and could not play, but he played us his Fantasia and Fugue from the "Prophète," which I admire more and more.

And, on December 31, he writes:—

Asantschewsky and I are going to give three orchestral concerts here in Lent. Of course I could not afford such a thing, but he takes all the

risk, and guarantees me 100 scudi—and I get the people to come, for he has no acquaintances here.¹

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Rome,

December 20, 1864.

Sgambati has been working very hard, and gave the first of his four chamber concerts the other day, when he played the Fantasia Cromatica magnificently. I had also a jolly success in my small way the other night at the German Club with the G Minor Mendelssohn Concerto and the grand Faust Waltz. I am most awfully tired tonight, but dare not let another day go by without writing to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, which I do with all my heart.

My Russian friend Asantschewsky is here, which is most jolly: I like him more than ever, if that were possible. There is a wretched Russian who has taken the room next to me, and has got a grand piano on which he is now practising scales in thirds in contrary motion at a rate which fills my soul with envy. . . .

There is really nothing else to tell you: Liszt is what he always is; Ehlert ditto; Frl. Stein has been ill for twelve days; and that wretched Russian is going on like mad—but anyhow I have learned four new finger exercises from him since I began this letter. . . .

¹ Apparently these projected concerts did not take place.

A Birmingham paper, dated January 31, 1865, gives the subjoined :

In a letter from Rome, published last week, we find the following paragraph relating to Mr. Walter Bache, son of the Rev. S. Bache of this town, and brother of the late Edward Bache, whose short musical career opened with great promise :—

“ We are having some charming parlour concerts, in which an English pupil of Liszt, Mr. Bache, takes a prominent part, and to my uneducated taste seems to justify the hope of an eminence in his art worthy of his master. Liszt has one other pupil, an Italian by the name of Sgambati, whose powers of execution are such that he must, it seems to me, become one of the famous pianists of the world.”

In March 1865 he gave his own concert. He had had great forebodings of non-success, but after it was over he wrote home :—

Before going to bed I must just add a line to tell you of the complete success of my concert. Liszt was very much pleased indeed, and said a great many very kind things which have encouraged me immensely.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Via dei Cappuccini, 6, 1^{mo} piano,
Rome,
April 5, 1865.

I have just been reading through Liszt's Sonate, which I heard him play about a month ago : and this makes me so naturally think of you that, though I ought to have been in bed hours ago, I can't help writing one line to say "how splendid"; this is really all I have got to say. I am so glad to hear of Sgambati's success, and of the numerous conversions you are both making to the new faith. . . .

Several things have decided me to try London this season, and I shall leave Rome at the end of April. It is a great risk, but I have really considered well before undertaking it. . . .

Could you let me have one line here before I leave, to give me your blessing, and tell me the name and address of the lady who introduced me to you, which, as you very properly remarked, was "not one of the worst things that had happened to me."

Now good-bye, and once more, "isn't it splendid?"

VII

LONDON

1865

IN the spring of this year, as intimated in the last letter, Walter Bache returned to London, which became his home for the rest of his life. His Italian life and experiences have been mainly given in his own letters ; but for the future there will be fewer of these to quote, because, being now in his own land, and but three hours' distance from his old home, they resolve themselves mostly into mere short notes, often undated, and not suitable for quoting.

Nevertheless, the coming twenty years were far and away the most important—the years of deeds, not words. But the state of his mind, musically speaking, will have been plainly seen from the foregoing letters ; and to the reader of these pages therefore the independent musical

position he almost immediately took up in London will appear as but the natural outcome of what has gone before. But to musical London of that day it was about the same as though a mine had been suddenly sprung, or a bomb thrown into their midst by a subversive hand. At all costs the revolutionist *must be suppressed*: friends and foes alike felt this; and Bache had not been long settled in London before the word "dangerous" was affixed to him. This he was made to feel pretty quickly. One of his first politic calls was on the mighty critic of the *Times*. He sent in his name, and the maid brought back word, "Please, sir, Mr. Davison says he's not at home."¹ There is no harm in repeating the story now, when the two actors in it are long gone: it serves to show what he had to fight against; for not only then, but every successive year till long, long afterwards, the critics as a body were what might be described as "not at home" to Bache.

¹ Mr. Hipkins adds the following remarks: "J. W. Davison had been very friendly to Edward, and took a keen interest in him. Walter was justified in calling on him from that circumstance. Edward had almost chummed with Davison, as far as a young man could, when he was domiciled with Mellon and his set, Pratten, Hausmann and the rest. Davison's opposition to Liszt and all new ideas set Walter bitterly against him. As to Davison not being visible although at home, he rarely rose before 5 p.m. ! . . . Up to the present day, our important musical critics discountenance any calls preliminary to public appearances."

He settled down at first in company with his old Milan friend, Signor Gustave Garcia; and they at once set about preparations for a joint concert. He writes to Mme. Laussot:—

May 17, 1865.

DEAR GRANNY,

I am not at all in a humour for letter-writing, having just played a “tune” at a tea-fight while all the people were talking. But as I know that you are leaving Florence so soon, I will do my duty like a man (no offence to the ladies). People are so stupid—they won’t take lessons, and my tin is going like a large snowball: but that is such a *very* old story that you must know it by heart; so just refer to any one of the ten thousand letters which I or any other of your protégés (musicians) have written, and you will find my sentiments exactly expressed. What will do your heart good is to know what I am morally convinced of: namely, that there are two sides to the musical question in London. I confess that among the fashionable world it is a mere fashion and business—for instance, my tea-party tonight: but I am sure that a better class is springing up. I was at the last Monday Popular Concert, when for the first time the whole programme was made up of Schumann’s works; and the evident attention and delight with which the people in the shilling places listened to every note of it was most jolly: there was no mistaking it. . . .

Mme. Schumann at the Monday Popular Concert was quite an event : until now they have not had any woman but Arabella.¹ She had an enormous reception, and played magnificently ; also Joachim. The consequence is that even that slow-coach old Philharmonic² has engaged Mme. Schumann for their next concert : she will play her husband's Concerto. Schumann at the Philharmonic is like "Pop goes the Weasel" in the Gewandhaus. . . . Garcia and I are hard at work for a matinée on July 4 (one has to prepare these things about a year beforehand) ; Dannreuther and I will play the *Préludes*!!!! first time on this side of the Channel. I hope we shan't lose any tin by it ; for though we need sell only sixteen tickets in order to cover our expenses, yet it is not so easy to find sixteen persons sufficiently awake to a sense of their duty to fork out half a guinea.

An undated letter to Mme. Laussot, presumably shortly after his first concert in July, contains the following :—

I hope you are getting on all jolly and not working too hard. What do you mean by blowing me up so hard ? I have not missed four engagements all the summer, so you must have been dreaming.

Callander is a very nice fellow : we went to "Fidelio" and "L'Africaine" together, but that is

¹ Mme. Arabella Goddard.

² The Philharmonic in those days was very conservative, and not exactly in the van of progress.

all that we have seen of each other. He came to my concert, and just heard me play the 'Trio abominably, and then went away again : but afterwards I warmed up, and got jolly notices in the papers : since then I played at the Beethoven Society, and got most blazing notices (regularly brilliant) in five or six papers. Also I have played in lots of little concerts and always get encored : you see I must boast if you blow me up so awfully. People are so stupid : they won't take lessons, confound them : so that now all my money is gone except about £10 : but perhaps I am going on a tour with a little opera company, so that I shall get several pounds by that : I have got an organistship for £40 a year. All the people (except the newspaper ones) were delighted with "Les Préludes" : in a few years when I have tin enough I shall have an orchestral concert, and then. . . . But really there are several sensible people in London : I have played the "Ideale," "Tasso" and "Préludes" with Cusins,¹ who was delighted with them : and I have made a good many conversions among the amateurs : at least six people are absolutely wild about that Mignon's song,² etc. So that I shall go on pitching into them. I was afraid at first that living in London might rather demoralize me : but I find that I come out of every argument hotter than ever for Liszt and Wagner.

¹ Sir William George Cusins, 1833-1893 ; organist of the Queen's private chapel ; composer and conductor.

² Liszt's "Mignon."

The *Athenæum* of July 8, commenting on this concert, said:—

On Tuesday, M. Gustave Garcia, one of the best of rising baritones, and Mr. Walter Bache gave a concert in company. We cannot think “*Les Préludes*,” a very difficult duett by the Abbé Liszt for two pianofortes, worth the labour bestowed on it by a couple of players so skilled as himself and Mr. Dannreuther. It was well received however.

TO MME LAUSSOT.

32, Grafton Street East,
Gower Street,

December 28, 1865.

I have just had a good breakfast, have lots of baccy and nothing to do, so I will write you a letter with a vengeance. The only difficulty is one feels so awfully inclined to begin sending messages and love to different people, and I might write a volume in that way, and without saying a word that was not perfectly true. But will you tell dear Nino¹ that my only reason for answering your jolly letter (just received) before his (received $3\frac{1}{2}$ months ago) is that yours is just now fresh before me like hot muffins (excuse my poetical simile), whereas I have rather forgotten what there was in his. Also I am sorry to say that my Italian is getting awfully rotten;—but tell him that I think of him daily, and have

¹ “Giovannino” Sgambati.

already begun two letters to him, but been interrupted: I will write soon, and when I have time enough to come to Rome I hope he will take me under his protection, to give me all the guiding which I can't get from Maestà.¹ . . .

I have already played the Dante Symphony once with an English pianist named Frood, and have got two more fellows on my books to play it with. I really have quite a little *Kreis* of Liszt admirers around me, and really find life tolerably endurable; but London is an awful place for an artist, and I feel it already, though I still try against the *Handwerkerei*² (excuse bad German). I do hope and trust you will come to London next summer, just to blow me up and encourage me a little if you can. . . .

At the Crystal Palace they have promised for six months to let me play: you know I have set my heart on the Schubert Fantasie (new here in Liszt's *Bearbeitung*), and yesterday Manns³ promised to let me rehearse it towards the end of January: some duffers have been telling him that the orchestra is too heavy, etc., for the piano: now if only I can forget myself, and think of Maestà and Nino and you, I will just make those duffers jolly well ashamed of themselves, and show them the difference between a "refined classical player" (anglicè a wooden-headed brute)

¹ Liszt.

² Meaning music as a trade instead of an art.

³ Mr. August Manns, the pre-eminent conductor of the Crystal Palace concerts for forty-five years.

and a pupil of Liszt. Manns is very clever, and will certainly let me play it in one of the concerts if only I make it effective. Manns is really the one conductor here who has something poetical about him : I admire him very much, although he considers it his duty to talk in the usual style about Liszt and Wagner :¹ but perhaps we should have done the same if we had been born second fiddles in an orchestra, and had to make our way for ourselves without any help from above. Manns has done an immense deal for music in London. . . .

The contemplated performance did not come off in 1866 at all ; for, doubtless on account of his heretical musical opinions, the much coveted "first appearance at the Crystal Palace," so dear to every débutant, was not offered to Bache until many years later ; and when at last the prize *was* put within his reach he begged permission to delegate it to someone else whom he was at that time striving to help on. However, eleven years later (in 1877) he remarked on a post-card to his friend in Florence, "On February 10 I played Liszt-Schubert Fantasie at Crystal Palace with capital success."

Early in 1866 an interesting musical event took place in Paris, in a performance of Liszt's "Graner

¹ The reader is reminded that this was thirty-six years ago.

Messe," a Mass written for the church of Gran, in Hungary. Bache went over for this, and gave a vivid picture in the following :—

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Paris,

March 17, 1866.

I should have sent you a letter full of marks of admiration and exclamations if I had written an hour sooner ; but now I have become rather sleepy after all my excitement, so that I shall be more matter of fact. I did borrow some tin to come here, and am staying with Asantschewsky, whom I like better than ever, and who has made enormous progress in composition : you will be delighted with some of his things : he is now married and his wife is really charming.

I arrived just in time to hear the "Graner Messe." I won't talk about the music itself, because you know what I think of it, and I have promised to be matter of fact. The execution was tolerable : unfortunately there were no women's voices in the chorus, so that the accents, etc., were not given with much vigour : the orchestra and chorus were unfortunately not raised, which of course lessened the effect in so vast a church. The church was crammed, and a large sum realized ; tickets ten and twenty francs : just fancy, there was a detachment of soldiers in the church, and occasionally during the music the officer gave the word of command at the top of his voice ! during the

Sanctus the drummer performed an obbligato! Can you believe me? Before the Mass we had several polkas played by the military band, and the Mendelssohn Wedding March badly played on the organ!! (One of the papers said that Liszt did it.) Directly after the last notes of the *Agnus Dei*, orchestra and chorus began some other piece belonging to the service in a Donizetti style, all the people believing that it was by Liszt! During the music, lady patronesses came round rattling money boxes, and upsetting chairs with their crinolines! The audience was just like the one at the Palazzo Barberini.

In spite of all this, the whole affair was a great event and immense pleasure to several people; and nobody talks of anyone but Liszt at present. I must really cut my story short. I saw him twice yesterday. *I can't tell* you how kind and delightful he was—I shall never forget it as long as I live. He commissioned me to write to you about it, and to beg you to communicate it to the Princess (I think he said the Princess), as he had not time to write. Today he came to breakfast here; I can't find adjectives enough to tell you how divine he was: he played so splendidly; Mme. Asantschewsky is quite ill from the excitement. He has received offers from three or four different sides for executions of his works here and elsewhere: at present it seems not quite certain what he will do. It seemed to me today as if I had never heard him before—it was something entirely new for me.

I go back to London tomorrow, as I have to play in four concerts next week.

In a letter to his sister, he says:—

I saw Mr. Mellon yesterday, and spent some time with him and his wife. I like him more every time I see him, and I think he will perhaps let me play at his concerts in the autumn, if he can manage it: but it is really a work of time in London: it is now more than half a year since they promised to let me play at the Crystal Palace, and I still see no chance of it.

Mr. Mellon, who extended to Walter Bache the love and kindness he had borne to Edward, was as good as his word. Writing to his father on November 9, 1866, Walter said:—

I am taking holiday from my old school today, as I am to play for the first time at Covent Garden tonight, and could not possibly teach all day. I am very anxious about it, as Mr. Mellon has taken me quite from hearsay, and if I don't have good success will never give me another chance.

On November 20 he added:—

I got on very well at Mellon's, being recalled, but I don't think the piece pleased.

The newspaper report said: "On Friday last Mr. Walter Bache made his first appearance at these concerts, and achieved a genuine success."

On May 23, 1867, he and Garcia gave a second joint concert, at Collard's Rooms in Grosvenor Street. Several items of this concert call for special notice : the Prayer, the Septuor, and the March for men's voices from "Tannhäuser," at that period a great innovation ; and the first performance in England of Liszt's "Ideale," arranged for two pianos, and played by Bache and his friend Mr. Frits Hartvigson.¹

Among those who took part in the Septuor, one name must be singled out. M. de Fontanier, who took the part of *Biterolf* on this occasion, and of *Wolfram* at the concert of 1870, was one of Bache's closest friends. In 1868 they went together to Munich for the performance of "Rheingold" (not, however, a successful one) ; and the tie between them was never broken, nor even relaxed, until Bache's death in 1888.

The "Tannhäuser" Septuor was repeated "by desire" at his third concert the following May. From this date onwards the concerts were given by himself alone, not in conjunction with any other artist ; and this one took place in the now defunct Beethoven Rooms in Harley Street. Two criticisms may here be recorded. The first, from

¹ Mr. Frits Hartvigson, eminent pianist in London ; pupil of Bülow ; Professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

the *Sunday Times*, referring to the "Tannhäuser" Septuor, says :—

Wagner has, unfortunately, carried some good ideas to the point of absurdity, but this Septuor demonstrates that, when he likes, he can write the music of the present with no mean power. It would have been better for himself, and certainly better for the art, had he left the future to take care of itself, and form its own school.

It was once said that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

The other remarks, from the *Athenæum* a few days before the concert, are as follows :—

Those who have desire to make acquaintance with the music of the future have an opportunity at hand in the concert of Mr. Walter Bache, which will take place on the 22nd. The programme is somewhat of a curiosity. The enthusiasm of its writer will be understood when we say that he considers the Abbé Liszt's Mephisto-Walzer, founded, not on Goethe's but crazy Lenau's "Faust," as "simple, consistent and well-proportioned in plan as any sonata by Clementi." If this be so (which we cannot bring ourselves to admit, knowing the composition well), those interesting themselves in such combinations as are here to be round may betake themselves to school, and study the symmetry of ugliness. No nobler-hearted

nor more free-handed man than the Abbé Liszt exists: no artist fuller of gracious remembrances of his inferiors; no player on his instrument to compare with him as to memory, brilliancy, consummate accomplishment. It is an honour and a privilege (as Mr. Bache has obviously felt) to have been conversant with such a man of genius. But, putting these truths on record for the last time, it must be also said that no special gifts, no personal fascinations, can transform bad into good music.

It was in the summer of this year that a small musical society was started which, strictly private though it was, may be said to have formed the nucleus of the later development and diffusion of Wagner's work in England. Not that it was originally so intended, but just as "We little know what great events from little causes rise," so there is no doubt that the simple meetings of a few musicians to play to, and to criticise, one another, led much further afield than was at first dreamt of.

The members were Messrs. Karl Klindworth,¹ Edward Dannreuther,² Frits Hartvigson and

¹ Herr Karl Klindworth, a favourite pupil of Liszt; eminent Professor and pianist; formerly in London; next in Moscow, where he was Professor in Nicholas Rubinstein's Conservatorium: at the present time in Berlin, where he is Director of the Klindworth-Scharwenka Conservatorium; pre-eminent for his editions of Bach, Mendelssohn, Chopin, etc., which now rank as classics, and above all for his piano-forte arrangements of Wagner's "Nibelungen Lied."

² Mr. Edward Dannreuther, eminent pianist and musical writer in London; Professor at the Royal College of Music.

Walter Bache, with Mr. A. J. Hipkins as "lay member," occasionally assisted by Mr. Kämpel the artist, who was also a singer. They dubbed themselves "The Working Men's Society," and for two years they met, almost weekly, at each other's houses alternately. All at that time were concert-players or concert-givers; and it must therefore have been no small ordeal to have to face one another's criticisms, knowing only too well how the weak point in each would be "spotted" by the others. Karl Klindworth alone, on account of his more respected years, was exempt from criticism. He "fathered" the meetings, and from him in particular came that impetus for Wagner, mentioned above.

From the report of the weekly meetings,¹ a few examples are culled, in illustration of these remarks. Thus:

December 6, 1867, at Klindworth's, Mr. Dannreuther led off the Wagner campaign with Liszt's *Spinnerlied* from "Der Fliegende Holländer": whilst on

January 18, 1868 (also at Klindworth's), Mr. Klindworth began, with the first two scenes from "Rheingold," those readings from Wagner which formed so important a feature of these meetings. When "Rheingold" had been completed (in

¹ Mr. Hipkins kept a private memorandum of these, from which, by his kind permission, the following extracts are made.

four scenes) the "Walküre" was next taken in hand.

March 6, 1868, at Hartvigson's, Bache played Liszt's transcription of the "Tannhäuser" March.

June 20, 1868, at Bache's, Mr. Klindworth gave a portion of "Tristan."

July 4, 1868, at Dannreuther's, Mr. Dannreuther played a considerable portion of the "Meistersinger," and Mr. Kämpel sang Walther's Lied from the same.

July 3, 1869, Miss Anna Mehlig¹ played Liszt's E flat Concerto at Bache's.

It must not be imagined, from the above extracts, that Wagner and Liszt were chosen to the exclusion of other composers. On the contrary, Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Henselt, Raff, Rubinstein, Gade, Bülow and others were included in the programmes. But the chief point of interest, in recalling these meetings of the "Working Men's Society," lies in the quiet unobtrusive propaganda they made for Wagner. At the present time, when Wagner forms the staple pabulum of a large proportion of the concert programmes, and when even Liszt is allowed to "play the people out," it is hard to realize the difficulties and the oppositions of those early days.

¹ Miss Anna Mehlig (now Mme. Falk-Mehlig); a distinguished pianist, at that time well known to the London public.

In this connection a few lines are therefore quoted from a contemporary writer.¹ In a charming biographical notice of Mr. Hipkins, Mr. Edwards writes :—

It is interesting to learn that Mr. Hipkins was one of the earliest disciples of Wagner in London. He became attached to the cult in 1866, not from admiration—that came later and is now a passion—but from the feeling that Wagner was being condemned in England unheard. A photographic group, taken in 1868, shows the few adherents Wagner then had in London. Karl Klindworth, then busy with the pianoforte score of the “Nibelungen Ring,” and who had been playing extracts from it week by week to Walter Bache, Edward Dannreuther, Frits Hartvigson, the painter Kümpel, and “Hip,” as his friends called the subject of this biographical sketch—these six enthusiasts form the friendly circle represented in the photograph. Except for Praeger, who fought alone, there was no one else to champion Wagner’s cause.

The last entry in the little private register, from which quotations have been freely made, is as follows :—

July 23, 1870. An opera by Wagner was, for the first time, played in England—“Der Fliegende

¹ “Alfred James Hipkins,” by F. G. Edwards. Published in the *Musical Times* of September, 1898.



A. J. HIPKINS

W. BACHE

F. HARTVIGSON

E. DANNREUTHER

K. KLINDWORTH

W. KUMPEL

THE WORKING MEN'S SOCIETY

Holländer" at Drury Lane (in Italian). Senta, Ilma de Murska, the Dutchman, Santley. Conductor, Arditi.

Writing to his sister, just before this event, Bache said :—

Next Saturday will be the first performance of a Wagner opera ever given in England! "Der Fliegende Holländer." I am sorry it is given so late in the season, as it can be given only twice, and it is not likely that this company will exist next year. So there is every chance of a fiasco owing to a bad performance; and if there be a success it can't make enough stir in London to force the Press to acknowledge it.

The last sentence is significant, as pointing to the uphill road Wagner has had to tread in England.

An event of unusual interest took place this summer. A letter from Mme. Laussot states it as follows :—

July 24, 1867.

MY DEAR UNCLE BACHE,

I write to inform you that I am in Germany, and that a great *Tonkünstler-Versammlung* takes place at Meiningen during four days in August—22nd to 25th inclusive—under Liszt's presidency; that Sgambati makes his début then

and there ; that on August 28 Liszt's "St. Elizabeth" will be performed in the *Wartburg* at Eisenach under the composer's own direction. Matthews, Callander, Miss Stein (now at Dresden) and I are bound for it. . . .

Will you just send me a line as quick as possible and tell me whether you are likely to come. Liszt is going to send you some music ; he told me to tell you so, and to "greet" you from him. He hopes and expects to see you. Tell me whether in passing you will pick me up. . . .

Yours, in haste, affectionately,

GRANDMOTHER.

Of course such news was like the magnet to the needle, and such a chance was not to be resisted. Bache joined the group of Liszt-devotees who met there, the special interest of the occasion being firstly that the performance was to be given on the very spot which the Oratorio illustrates ; and secondly that Liszt was to be the conductor. He himself, writing shortly before that time to his cousin Eduard Liszt, remarked :—

Towards the end of July I shall go to Weimar. The "Wartburg Festival" is fixed for August 28. On that day the "Elizabeth" will be heard in the hall of the *Minnesingers*. A fortnight before that the concerts of the *Tonkünstler-Versammlung* will take place at Meiningen.

The Meiningen Festival was a brilliant affair

from the musical point of view. Amongst the works of foremost interest were:—Liszt's sacred work, "Die Seligkeiten"; his Symphonic Poem, "Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne"; and the song of "Die drei Zigeuner"; Berlioz's scenes from "Romeo and Juliet," and from "Much Ado about Nothing"; Robert Volkmann's "Sappho" for soprano solo; Bülow's Symphonic Tone-poem "Nirwana"; Schumann's Song-cycle "Spanisches Liederspiel"; a Symphony by Lassen, etc.

During the stay at Meiningen, Liszt had promised to play at somebody's private house: "I cannot invite you there," he said to his musical friends, "but I will put the window open, and you will hear every bit as well outside." So all the friends assembled outside the house where he was going to play, and there was a large gathering beneath the open window. They waited afterwards to greet him when he came out; and one of the company proposed that they should all lie down on the ground for Liszt to walk over them, in token of their musical subjection to him!

Close upon the heels of this Festival followed the equally memorable "St. Elizabeth" performance at the Wartburg, the éclat and grandeur of which none who were present on that occasion could ever forget. Many, if not most, of the artists who had taken part in the Meiningen

Festival remained for the Eisenach one, given in "commemoration of the eighth centenary of the founding, and in honour of the restoration, then just completed, of that remarkable and historically interesting relic of the Middle Ages" (the Wartburg).

In the spring of 1868, while the meetings of the "Working Men's Society" were in full swing, came Bache's fourth annual concert, on which occasion he and Mr. Klindworth played two of Liszt's Symphonic Poems, "Orpheus" and "Mazeppa," arranged for two pianos. The following year Messrs. Dannreuther and Hartvigson played the "Préludes," similarly arranged, at Bache's fifth concert. Thus, each year, small beginnings were made, preparing the way for the orchestral performances of these works later on.

In 1871 began Bache's *orchestral* concerts, and from this time onwards he continued them for the rest of his life, with only such occasional intermission as was rendered necessary by the enormous drain upon his personal resources. It must be remembered that these concerts were in no way subsidized, but were undertaken at his own expense, with the sole object of making his Master's music known in England. This extreme single-mindedness—and an entire absence of that professional jealousy with which, alas, the musical

profession is so often accredited—led him to put himself aside on every possible occasion where there was anyone else who, he thought, could interpret the music better. Thus, one year it would be Bülow at the conductor's desk ; another year, Manns ; another year, Dannreuther ; and so on. Of this, more in its place.

It must not be imagined, however, that all was plain sailing for Bache, even apart from the concert-giving. London is a cruel stepmother to those who don't succeed, flowery and golden as are her paths to those who do. And there was a period when he found it so impossible to make both ends meet that he had serious thoughts of going off to India, and probably he would have done so, had he not felt that, musically, it would be an absolutely suicidal act.

Being extremely anxious to have some musical intercourse with Bülow, in the summer of 1871 he went to Florence for this purpose. He writes thence :—

TO HIS FATHER.

Borgo San Frediano, No. 10,
August 2, 1871.

I arrived here on Monday after a most pleasant journey. I stayed one day in Paris, where I visited several places of interest, and saw many of the public buildings which have been burnt during

the late disturbances¹—a most sad sight, I can assure you. My journey from Paris to Florence was considerably longer than I had anticipated ; in one place the railroad had been inundated and it was necessary to walk for some distance ; and the trains corresponded badly, which obliged me to sleep two nights on the road. But I arrived here on Monday morning and at once made my visit to Herr von Bülow, the celebrated pianist, whom I have so long wished to see. He received me with the greatest kindness imaginable, and I have been so fortunate as to find a beautiful lodging and a pretty good piano in the very house in which he lives. He allows me to spend a part of every morning with him, plays to me and hears me play ; in the evening we dine together, and I remain with him until bedtime. I had not ventured to hope for so much good fortune, and I am sure it will be of the greatest subsequent advantage to me.

(August 3.) I had written so far at 9 a.m. yesterday, when I was summoned to go to Herr von Bülow, with whom I remained until three o'clock, when we went out together. The six hours passed away like so many minutes ; it is useless to attempt to describe them, but they are certainly six of the happiest ones I have ever spent.

I have not yet seen any of the pictures, statues and churches with which this beautiful town abounds, but I intend to pay my first visit to one of the principal picture-galleries today, and must

¹ The Franco-German War and insurrection of the Commune.



BULOW

BUONAMICI

BACHÉ

THE THREE B'S

B SHARP, B FLAT AND B NATURAL

try to see something or other every day. The only difficulty is the heat, with its accompaniment of flies : mornings and evenings are more beautiful than you can imagine ; and the rooms of these thick-walled houses, as also the narrow and shady streets, never become unpleasantly warm. So that the heat is (as far as I am concerned) no more trying than it is in England. But it is most unpleasant and unadvisable to pass over any unprotected (*i.e.*, unshaded) square or bridge between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. . . . All the natural and artificial beauties of the country strike me ten times more forcibly now than was the case six years ago, when I lived in Italy, and had not the unpicturesque contrast of London life so clearly before me.

His second orchestral concert in March 1872, included Liszt's two Symphonic Poems, namely, "Les Préludes" (repeated by desire), and the "Festklänge" for the first time ; and he had the valuable co-operation of Mr. Manns on this occasion. His own criticism of the concert is embodied in the following hasty note to his sister on the day after it :—

DEAR MAGGIE,

The concert *was a success* ; how far, I can't yet judge, as the giver of the concert always comes in for a lot of compliments and applause even if he play ever so badly. But the two symphonies went well, though much more might have been

done to them by additional rehearsal: all my friends (Deichmann, Wiener,¹ Daubert,² etc.) *most kind*. The piano playing was good, I think, but not quite my very best. Welch's pupil³ a decided success. Manns very kind.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

58, Great Russell Street,
Bedford Square,

June 10, 1872.

Very many thanks for your most welcome letter; it was indeed time that you should think of this here child, but he knows how little time you have for letter-writing. Now look here! it is quite impossible for me to leave London earlier than July 20, or even perhaps a few days later. I have explained all my reasons to Callander, and so won't repeat them—(Callander is an *out-and-out brick*: ask him to tell you of his good action towards me:) and I suppose all music will be over by then. So I have half made up my mind to stay in London during the six weeks' vacation, and practise like a Trojan. I must economize every farthing, as I have hardly paid the debts of my last concert (deficit of more than £100), and next year I want to give my concert in St. James's Hall, with orchestra of 80, and chorus of 200 at least, in order to do the Thirteenth Psalm and the

¹ Wilhelm Wiener, 1838-1895; distinguished London violinist and Professor.

² Hugo Daubert, a well-known London violoncellist.

³ Miss Abbie Whinery.

Schnitterchor from "Prometheus";¹ perhaps the Schumann Concerto and the Huldigungsmarsch of Wagner: the two last are doubtful. I must prepare for a loss of £200, so you see I have to think of it now, and must teach all the young women I can possibly collar, so as to turn their guineas into fiddles and singers. The great thing is to go *piano* and *sano*. The "Préludes" has been a great success; I never thought the "Festklänge" a good choice for England, but Bülow would have it. Next year, you see, I choose for myself, and I think you must say that the selection is good.

Tomorrow night Hartvigson plays Liszt's E flat Concerto at the Philharmonic, and he plays it magnificently. It will be the third (and probably best) performance in London. Dannreuther and "your uncle" have already played it.

Many thanks for all the news of Bülow: please try to give him my most affectionate and respectful good wishes. I still hope to see him in October, if the American project holds good: for his sake I almost wish it could be abandoned; it will nearly be the death of him.

Hallé gave "Les Préludes" twice last winter in Manchester with tremendous success, and I think will do it again.

I wish I could tell you that I had made a *very decided* step forward as a pianist during the last few years: some slight progress there has been, but I must still look forward to get over this infernal

¹ Both by Liszt.

namby-pamby milk-and-water business. I think I have the right stuff in me, but don't seem able to bring it out; and of course the quantity of teaching which *must* be done if I am to continue the Liszt propaganda, which I *will*, by Jove, is very unfavourable to self-improvement. Well, my dear old grandmother, don't wait till I am dead to write again, but do once in a year send me a line to cheer me up.

In August began the rehearsals, at Munich, for a repetition under Dr. von Bülow of "Tristan und Isolde," the first performance of which had been given there in 1865. At this, of course, Wagner's warm, if few, English adherents mustered in full force, and, in spite of monetary difficulties referred to in the last letter, Bache was amongst the number.

Writing to his father on the evening of August 17, 1872, he says:—

I should have written this morning, but was obliged to go out very early to the rehearsal of Wagner's great opera of "Tristan und Isolde." The rehearsal lasted five hours, and has so much exhausted me that I am quite unfit for anything: the performance will take place tomorrow evening. The hearing of this music has been really one of the greatest events of my life, and I am truly thankful that I did not let this opportunity slip.

The Munich opera offered a rich treat during these holiday weeks ; for, in addition to "Tristan," "Lohengrin," "Tannhäuser," and "Der Fliegende Holländer" were also given, besides "Fidelio," "Der Freischütz" and other works. On September 6 Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar" was given, with Bülow's incidental music.

On August 24 Bülow gave a concert for the benefit of the Bayreuth scheme. On this occasion Mr. Frits Hartvigson played Weber's Concertstück with orchestra at Bülow's special request. Bache, writing home, said :—

My friend Hartvigson played with very great and very well-deserved success. I think it was the best concert at which I have ever been present.

After his return he writes to his sister in the early autumn :—

58, Great Russell Street,
Thursday.

DEAREST MAGGIE,

We have had a most splendid visit to Munich—Liszt lived in the same hotel and I saw him every day, and can say "Now lettest Thou Thy servant . . ." I have been so tremendously anxious to see him *once more*. He was exactly the same as ever, only perhaps a little aged and saddened ; he has had great trials lately.

The "Rheingold" was not performed. The singers were not ready with their parts: they

could sing the notes, but had no further idea of it. The machinery and decorations were ridiculous: they would do better at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham. It is a sad thing altogether, as Wagner's few friends are making the best use of their opportunity, and the newspapers are swarming with lies of every possible shade of malice and stupidity.

I have one splendid likeness of Liszt, which he gave me; and have ordered two others which Hartvigson will bring in October. It was such a thing to see Klindworth again; Moscow is not the place for him; I fear he is very miserable there, but he all the more enjoyed being with us once more. Liszt was very much pleased to see him again. Liszt has promised me an invitation to Hungary next summer. He will visit a friend of his there, and take one or two people with him.¹

Sgambati was also in Munich, Rubinstein, Henselt, Mme. Viardot, Joachim, besides a lot of duffers from London. I did hear two rehearsals of the "Rheingold." So that, even as far as that went, I was well repaid for my visit.

The projected orchestral concert took place in February 1873, when all the works were given which he had contemplated bringing forward: namely, Liszt's Thirteenth Psalm and the chorus

¹ This visit, apparently however, took place in the earlier part of 1873, and not in the summer at all, and Bache was not of the party.

of Reapers from "Prometheus," the Schumann Concerto, and Wagner's Huldigungsmarsch. Mr. Manns and Bache shared the duties of conductor. One of the papers, commenting on this concert, said:—

Mr. Bache deserves the thanks of all who are interested in the music of the new German school—even of those who are adverse—for the opportunity afforded by him of hearing specimens of it which have otherwise been ignored here.

Another wrote as follows:—

The Psalm exhibits all Liszt's peculiarities, his extraordinary contempt of harmony, and the multitudinous changes of key on every fifth or sixth note, which make its performance, by an ordinary choir, almost an impossibility. The bolus (taken before the medicine this time) was afforded by a wondrous performance, from memory, of Schumann's Concerto in A (Op. 54), the pianoforte solos by the *bénéficiaire*. Mr. Bache made light of all difficulties; and his magnificent rendering of the third *allegro vivace* movement, *malgré* its peculiarities of time and accent, gained him well-merited applause, and showed, should the talented young musician ever follow the beaten track of the old masters, instead of lingering among the vagaries of Liszt and Wagner, how brilliant might be his future.

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

58, Great Russell Street,
Bedford Square,

April 29, 1873.

Excuse a very hurried notice ; it must be that or none at all. Bülow is pretty well, though still knocked up and suffering from a cold : most kind and charming towards me, delighted with Broadwood, and the beef and the bitter beer. . . . He had the greatest possible success at the Philharmonic—a magnificent reception—and three recalls after the Beethoven E flat Concerto, which he of course played splendidly, and as correctly as ever Thalberg played. It was just a little cold (!): he was in a rage about something. In the second part, however, he played the Fantasia Cromatica *superbly*—his *very best* : and the effect was magical : the public was the reverse of stupid, I can assure you ; three recalls, and then they made him play again—a Passepied of Bach. Some critics will be hostile and some favourable, but he has taken a complete hold of the public, so they may write what they like. He will play Henselt's and Rubinstein's (third) Concertos. Perhaps Liszt's E flat, and will give two Recitals in St. James's Hall : other things may turn up. He is playing better than I ever heard, and everyone agrees that no such playing has been heard in London. He will play at the Wagner concert (Beethoven's E flat Variations) and conduct Tristan Vor- and Nach-spiel. Here endeth the present lesson. . . .

O if I could consult you ! I lost £170 by my

last concert. . . . I am up to the ears in debt, and have to teach from morning to night: if this goes on I shall not make a first-rate pianist, as I think to a certain extent I might. Bülow insists that I should give up the idea of repeating the Liszt Psalm next year; give a concert on a much smaller scale, and get more time for practice. I begin to think he is right, but have not yet come to any decision.

As regards Liszt's music I feel quite *selbstständig*. I see the truth of much that Bülow says, and am thankful to him for helping me to clear my judgment: but then I go home, take down the "Graner Messe," for instance, and "die Erde hat mich wieder." There is *no resisting* the Liszt grandeur of conception, even though it be frequently mixed up with much that might have been better. But this is not the question: I must decide whether I shall sacrifice myself entirely to the production of Liszt's orchestral and choral works (which after all can never be immortal as Bach, Beethoven and Wagner: here I feel that Bülow is right). Or shall I make my own improvement the object of my life, and not spend a third of my income in one evening? *Of course* I shall never be untrue to Liszt; but I feel rather disinclined to repeat the Psalm next year, and almost think of a concert with small orchestra: "Orpheus," "Festklänge," etc. If you have any decided view on the subject let me know; otherwise don't write. . . .

I am so thankful to give you such a glorious account of Bülow.

Bache took advantage of Bülow's presence in England this autumn to give his annual orchestral concert in November, instead of waiting till the following year. The programme included two of Liszt's "Poèmes Symphoniques" for orchestra, namely "Tasso" and "Orpheus"; the same master's March "Vom Fels zum Meer"; the scene of "Isolde's death," now so familiar, but at that time new to English audiences; in the words of the programme, it was "repeated at the desire of many who heard the first performance in England (under Herr von Bülow's direction) at the Wagner Society's Concert, May 9, 1873." In addition to the above, there was the Schubert P. F. Fantasia orchestrated by Liszt, now frequently heard, but then almost unknown, and played on this occasion by the concert-giver.

Two or three sentences from a critique of this concert in the *Monthly Musical Record* for January, 1874, serve to show the gradually turning tide of public opinion in regard to the vexed question of the "Music of the Future."

Ever since Mr. Bache returned, nine years ago, from his tutelage under Liszt, it has been his principal aim to advance his master's claims, as well as those of one or two other composers, who, till the institution of the Wagner Society, seemed in danger of being altogether overlooked by other

concert-givers. By degrees, musicians have come to regard Mr. Bache's annual concert as one of the most important of the season, and certainly unique in its character. . . . To the selection brought forward no exception could be taken, except on the ground of its superabundant richness. . . .

By installing Dr. von Bülow as conductor, Mr. Bache, who on previous occasions has given ample proof of his own remarkable skill in this capacity, made it plain that he was influenced by no motives of self-glorification, but simply by the desire to present the works selected in the most perfect manner possible. Of Dr. von Bülow's powers as a conductor, as well as those he possesses as an executant, it would be impossible to speak in too exaggerated terms. When we recall the fact that he conducted the first performances of Wagner's "Tristan," "Die Meistersinger," etc., without a score before him, it will be no surprise to those of our readers who were not present at Mr. Bache's concert to learn that he conducted throughout, and even accompanied the songs, from memory. . . .

The enthusiasm evoked by "Tasso" was extreme. . . .

"Orpheus," though less exciting in character than "Tasso," is certainly none the less beautiful; but being less clearly defined as to its poetical intent, and therefore less easy of comprehension, produced less sensation upon the audience.

The same paper, remarking upon a concert of the Wagner Society, said:—

It was probably the warm reception accorded to Liszt's "Tasso" at Mr. Walter Bache's concert that determined its repetition here. Again it was splendidly played under the direction of Dr. von Bülow, who took the earlier portion of it a shade slower than on the former occasion—a procedure by which it seemed to gain in clearness of effect. "Tasso" is certainly a work which grows in favour the more familiar it becomes.

VIII

AS A TEACHER

LONDON (*continued*)

THE interregnum caused by the interruption of the annual sequence of Walter Bache's orchestral concerts gives the opportunity to introduce here a parenthetical section, to which no exact date can be affixed. His younger sister, who was hoping to make her way as a pianist and teacher, was in the early part of her career greatly perplexed to know how to set about doing this. She had had to be content with such musical crumbs as fell from her brothers' table; for, by the time you come to the youngest child of a long family with a short purse, there is not much left for a musical education of any sort. In these difficulties she was accustomed to apply to her brother Walter for advice on every point that cropped up; hence the rather heterogeneous character of the following letters. The special

object in quoting them here is that they contain so much sound practical help and so many useful hints, that it is thought they may be of service to other neophytes in the up hill career of music. The writer of these pages has been asked this question, for instance, more often than any other : —“What can I do to get pupils?” or “How must I set about giving lessons?” Bache’s recipe for this will appear in due course.

Nearly all these letters are undated, so it can only be surmised from their contents that they were mostly written in the seventies.

March 19.

DEAREST CHILD,

. . . I can’t well advise as to the prospectus, but I am rather in favour of having the terms in black and white if you advertise at all, which *you* must ; it looks straightforward. Good-bye, my dear child. I am glad you are getting some pupils ; *get some tin*, that is the first thing : then go to Florence or Jericho or anywhere else ; and meanwhile remember that life is awfully short ; you are twenty-five : in twenty-five more years you will probably kick the bucket. So don’t groan and whine away every day you are in Birmingham : if you do that, it is an absolute certainty that you will groan and whine in Florence or anywhere else. But try to enjoy life properly and sensibly : this can only be done by *work* (of different kinds), and can be done just as well in

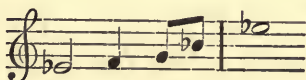
Brummagem as in Jerusalem. But if you prefer the latter city, make some tin and go there—only don't make everyone miserable till you have got it.

Hoc dixit apostolus,
W. BACHE.

November 28.

DEAREST CHILD,

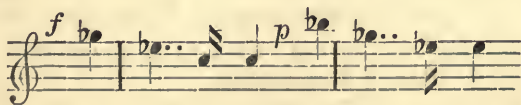
I am flabbergasted: what is the first melody of the Eclogue?¹



What does Eclogue mean? How would a shepherd on the mountains play such a tune? Well, I suppose somewhere about $\text{♩} = 88$, but you know that as well as I do. Do what Wagner says: ask *what is the tune?* and you will seldom make bad mistakes. The principal subject which is in a higher register



might go a little quicker: say $\text{♩} = 100$: then the sequel



¹ Liszt's Eclogue, from the "Années de Pèlerinage."

might be a little slower than $\text{♩} = 100$, so that the *forte* has time to disappear before the *piano* begins. But bless my soul—use your noddle, my dear child, and it will be all right. The mere passage work (the quavers where there is no melody) not too slow and dragging.

January 31.

I am glad you have so many members:¹ give them lots of Bach and they will grumble at first, and all come again next year, and bring their sisters, cousins and aunts. Give them the ——,² or the measles, or the mumps, and your class will resemble a snowball in the lovely month of May.

I have been at four of the six Berlioz “Faust” performances; it is a *splendid* work: our musicians talk of it as people do of port wine: whilst poor Berlioz lived (and half starved) it was eccentric, sensational, and clap-trap; now it is a work of great genius, with some slight exaggerations; in ten years more these will have disappeared. . . .

I never heard “L’Enfance du Christ”; of course I shall go. Berlioz’s “Romeo and Juliette” will be played at the Philharmonic concert on March 10: come for that, will you? and spend your birthday with your loving brothers?

Monday night.

As regards music lessons—“First catch your pupil”; then if she can practise $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day I

¹ In a singing-class she had started in conjunction with the late Dr. C. S. Heap, in Birmingham.

² A work by a recent composer; therefore not named here.

divide it thus : mechanical studies 25 minutes : studies 20 : new piece, or part of it, 30 ; old piece, or part of it (by heart), 15 minutes. (N.B.—If the pupil has been badly taught, don't let her get up any old pieces which she learned with the previous duffer.) In one hour's lesson, except in the first few lessons, I find time for all these things ; or, if anything is neglected, I make the pupil remind me to take it first in the next lesson : thus everything comes round once a fortnight at least. Sight reading is only done in the lesson when there is really spare time, which is not very often. No pupil must read at sight alone until pretty well grounded in slow thorough practice, and then only in the proportion of about $\frac{1}{4}$ hour to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' regular practice. If the pupil has a relative who reads better than herself, put her up to four-hand playing. But the keeping up of old pieces and reading can only be attended to when the pupil has got into good habits of practising.

DEAREST CHILD,

Verily thou puzzlest me, but I will do my best to answer. There is a conservatory at Munich. The journey would of course cost more than to Stuttgart, as the distance is greater (*vide* Butler's Atlas). A foreign Bradshaw (with Alfred's blessing) will tell you. Dear child, as regards public playing, etc., you must decide for yourself. I have only been against it because I see clearly that, except in the case of pianists who attract the general public, it is a case of begging and sponging on

acquaintances. Even when a player like —— comes to London, she has to tout about and extract half-guineas from people in a way which you and I would not be capable of: and we shall never play half so well as she does. You must not refer to my concerts: I give away almost all my tickets; in addition to my own playing, I give them an orchestra or chorus which is worth paying for. But for years to come I should not dream of a piano recital: it is mere begging for charity.

I should think a year's living at Munich would cost the same as at Stuttgart: you will spend your £100 wherever you go.

In these days of advertisements it does not do to attach too much importance to them: Messrs. Moses and Son can beat Messrs. —— and ——¹ any day. The real advertisement for a piano teacher is to make Miss Smith play so well that Miss Jones immediately wants to take lessons: this is the way in which I have got almost *every one* of my pupils. At the same time you *must* play yourself and always make progress, or your teaching will of course *not* make progress, and consequently go to pot (serve it right).

58, Great Russell Street,
Bedford Square,
April 7.

MY DEAREST CHILD,

I have heard of all your troubles with a very heavy heart, and think of you from morning

¹ Two teachers of the day, who owed much of their success to puff and humbug.

to night.¹ You are now having your share of the ills of this life, and perhaps if they all come in a lump now, Providence may leave you alone for the future. But it is a heavy trial to have this unexpected interruption in your studies, let alone all the pain and illness which you suffer. I am sure you will bear it bravely and pluckily, as many much less fortunate people have borne greater trials. A poor lady was executed the other day at Durham for poisoning some dozen people, and her only complaint was that they would not let her smoke her pipe in the prison! So you see you might be worse off than you are.

But seriously, dear child, keep up your courage! You have good doctors and nurses, and a most kind friend in Miss ——; we must all feel grateful to her! And if the unfortunate lady at Durham does not afford you sufficient consolation, think of poor Buonamici² who had the most *brilliant* career imaginable in his grasp. Everything has been

¹ After she had been teaching for some years, feeling that further musical education was a necessity, she had gone to one of the foreign Conservatories. While studying there, an accident to the right hand put a stop, once and for ever, to the career of a pianist. It was during the dangerous illness with which this accident was connected that the above letter was written. Though a joke throughout, written for the purpose of cheering the invalid, it contains many underlying truths, and is quoted for these.

² Signor Giuseppe Buonamici, pupil of Bülow; whom in his turn he succeeded as Professor at the Munich Conservatorium, where the present writer was his pupil. Settled in Florence, his native town, but well known also as a pianist in London.

taken from him by this weakness of his arm, and yet no one ever hears a repining word from him. Try to imitate him and you will be happy, even if you have to take in washing instead of piano pupils. But you will get all right, I am sure; and this interruption, though occurring at so unfortunate a time, will be only temporary.

Ever your affectionate

WALTER.

Kingsbury,

December 21.

Of course I have often thought of your trouble, and it now seems to me not so hopeless as I at first thought. We don't groan and moan any more that we can't be Bülow and Rubinstein: we have grown out of that stage, thank goodness: our ambition is to do the best we can; of course any physical impediment to this, bad health or the loss of a finger, would be a great grief to us, because it would deprive us of the only satisfaction we are ever likely to have in this life—that of having a high aim and always striving towards it.

But are there not many pieces of highest rank, sufficient in time to form a limited *répertoire*, which make no great demands on the right hand, and on which you might doubly concentrate your energies? which you might finish and perfect in a way you would never have dreamed of, had not this misfortune compelled you to concentrate? I thought of this the other day when reading Chopin's C sharp minor Nocturne, Op. 27. Of

course if you practise only a dozen pieces all your life you will never improve musically : but, as your last letter tells me, you have other sources of musical life. . . .

They say Bottesini has one finger useless : we have had one-legged dancers ; so I don't think you need give it up because you can't play everything : you can so much the more refine and finish what is within your powers. . . .

This is a splendid place for work. I have had two days here, and done more than in a fortnight in London. Now I want no interruption : holidays are short, and the "Faust" symphony is long : likewise Beethoven Op. 106 : I can do nothing at such great works without a little continuous study : half an hour on Monday night, then no more till Thursday night (likewise a half-hour), is *absolutely useless* : one cannot keep up the thread of such great stories.

42, Upper Gloucester Place,
Dorset Square,
Monday.

In reply to your question : I try to teach every pupil as if he were to appear at a concert of the Crystal Palace : those whom I know to have little time and no earnestness I recommend to Sir — —. I can't write more : think it out for yourself : can you read Shakespeare with a Frenchman who doesn't know the commonest rules of English grammar ? Just as little can you study Beethoven (or Blumenthal) with a pupil who doesn't know how to study a C major scale. Use your own head, and you will be all right.

. . . I am very busy now, as I want to settle the dates and get out the orchestral engagements for my concert next year : this involves fearful scribbling. So no more now.

The following letter must have been written just after the appointment of the late Archbishop Benson to the See of Canterbury. The Archbishop was a Birmingham boy, and a nephew of one of the most eminent surgeons in that city (the late Alfred Baker, Esq.).

Kingsbury,
December 26.

. . . Ask Mr. Baker to get his nephew to have a new prayer inserted in the prayer-book, "Teach us, O Lord, to play the second fiddle." I am sure not only musicians but the world at large would be much happier if they would sometimes study that noble instrument.

Well, now I must stop ; accept my very best wishes for the New Year ! I hope it may be a happy one for all of us. For me it seems to promise more piano practice and less anxiety. I hope this may be fulfilled !

Good-bye, my dear child, and bless you.

Ever your W. B.

I find I can practise seven hours a day here ! Of course not yesterday or today, but on an uninterrupted day : it is so jolly.

March 11.

. . . Now, very many happy returns of the day, my dear child. I would have written yesterday from Dublin, but two nights out of bed somewhat muddles my intellect as regards dates, and I quite forgot it. How awfully old we all are; but if one keeps health one may like Liszt and Klindworth be as juvenile at fifty or sixty as babes unborn. But without health this is impossible, so let it be the first thing; and if we can insure it by taking an eighteenpenny cab when we should catch cold in a twopenny bus, let us spend the 1s. 4d. and save it in doctors' bills. . . .

If ——— received Wüllner which I sent him, you can by and by explain the really important parts to him, omitting what he knows already. I now give the book to all my pupils, thus saving time in writing on the board; but at the end of each section I make parallel exercises on the board to test whether they have really twigged or merely learned by heart. Also in reading pieces of music (trios, etc.) if they bungle at an interval which they have had in Wüllner I make them go through it again—don't they curse!!! Now this is all I know, dear child, so don't ask any questions.

42, Upper Gloucester Place, N.W.,

November 17.

. . . About Mr. ———, do exactly what you think right, dear child: I should think an occasional appearance at a concert would be an invaluable spur on to your practising, if you wish to

pursue P. F. playing as your object in life (*i.e.*, after gaining the necessary bread and butter by teaching); but if you merely carry on your piano-forte playing as a secondary object to literary work, etc., then I am not quite so sure that there would be any special advantage in it. These have always been my views: we can't all be Rubinsteins and Bülows, but we should only go before the public with our *very best* . . . we must not be amateurish in anything we undertake. Them's my sentiments; and now good night.

Sunday night. I reopen my letter to explain better my meaning which seems so harsh.

(a) If you practise up the Fantaisie Impromptu (Herr Chopin) to play at Mr. ——'s concert, to wear a new dress, get new pupils and a famous notice in the *Daily Post*, that is amateur: *Don't*.

(b) If you are steadily increasing your knowledge of P. F. music and feel that the only way to be sure and firm in such knowledge is to test your private study occasionally in public, then to play the same Fantaisie Impromptu would be artistic and right: *Do*.

December 5.

DEAREST CHILD,

We talked of finger, wrist and arm actions: then I spoke of two things which I am accustomed to call "wrist and finger combinations." We went through one of them



and I forgot the other, which, to me, is equally indispensable : it is this : wrist in one hand, and finger in the other. I merely let pupils illustrate it *very slowly* on five consecutive white keys, thus :—



It was stupid of me not to be more explicit : whenever you can give me another ten minutes I should like to show you one or two other “dodges ” which I find of greatest value in teaching, and which *may* not have occurred to you.

Ever your W. B.

Remind me : what I would say is exemplified in Mendelssohn’s *Lied ohne Worte* No. 1, Book I.; and Bertini’s *Study in C minor*, Book I. (Buonamici).

As may have been inferred from some of the above letters, Bache depended mostly on his own individual exercises for the mechanical part of his teaching. Like the writer of *Ecclesiastes*, he always felt strongly that “of making many books there is no end ” ; he therefore added none to the

voluminous literature of five-finger exercises and technical studies. It is not to be supposed that he did not use these; but he relied far more upon his own personal training adapted to each individual pupil, with the result that, for any pupils who could take in the hints and examples he gave them, there was a delightful freshness and spontaneity even in the so often dreaded "five-finger work," in contrast with the stultifying effect of many of the books of technical exercises, where the pupil wades through page after page with his eyes on the book and his mind in the regions of vacuity.

Bache's great sense of justice, and a certain naïveté peculiarly his own, made him most popular with his pupils, though at the same time his extreme earnestness and conscientiousness kept them up to the mark, with a dread of coming short before a master who took things so seriously. This very seriousness won over to a real love of music many a pupil who had begun it in a half-hearted manner, merely "because mamma wished it," or to learn a "pretty piece"; while the naïveté piqued the pupil's sense of humour, so that a home-thrust could often be given in a joking and perfectly kind way.

On one occasion he had a pupil who *could not* give any idea of rhythm. He tried one way after

another to drum some hint of his meaning into her mind ; at last, nearly beside himself to find a better simile, he walked up and down the room saying, " But, my dear Miss So-and-So, don't you know the old rhyme,



In a singing-class of young girls, when teaching them to sing chords from dictation, there was one chord which he used to call "Clapham Junction," because it led everywhere! The result was that when he called out for "Clapham Junction" the girls were all wide-awake and ready for it ; whereas if he had asked for the chord of the diminished seventh they would probably have looked utterly blank, or sung some other at haphazard.

As will be seen by the letters to his sister, he did not err on the side of laxity. Probably he did not treat other pupils to quite so much sarcasm or strictness ; but his lessons to her, whether by letter or by word of mouth, were certainly bracing, if at times a little discouraging. And the deep earnestness and thoroughness underlying all his work, whether it were the teaching of a scale or the rehearsal for an orchestral concert,

together with a tough perseverance that would never say die, were the secret of most of his success, whether as teacher or artist.

After his death, the following lines were written by a friend, in just appreciation of the power he possessed of awaking a love of music in those who had previously been indifferent to it :—

Blessèd in waking life in many a soul
Wherein the love of beauty slumbering lay ;
Whose rising was the dawn of fuller day,
The “part” that sounds the “prelude” to the whole ;

Blessèd in giving all his life away
For very love of what he deemed most fair,
Seeking nor gain, nor gratitude, nor share
In recompense of fame, he went his way.

When, after Liszt's death, his letters were being collected with a view to publication, it was rather a matter of surprise to find how very few Bache possessed of these. The explanation was given by Signor Buonamici, to whom Walter had confided that he had burnt a great proportion of Liszt's letters, because they contained remarks too complimentary to himself.

IX

LONDON (*continued*) AND BAYREUTH

1874

THIS autumn Walter Bache made his first appearance at the Crystal Palace,¹ with the Liszt transcription of Weber's Polonaise in E major. At the same concert Raff's "Lenore" symphony was given for the first time in this country. The Polonaise and its soloist had a very warm reception. The papers, as a whole, spoke most highly of this début, as well as of the Liszt transcription; but prejudice was not yet dead in 1874, any more than it is in 1901, and Bache

¹ Mr. Hipkins relates the following: "Walter's first appearance, in 1874, at the Crystal Palace, was nearly put off by his missing the concert-train at Victoria. He rushed out frantic to the cabstand, and bargained, I think for 30s., for a hansom to take him down in time. The cabman said, 'You must hold tight, sir!' Walter arrived just in time to step on to the platform, and one may imagine in what condition for the public performance of a difficult work and as a first appearance!"

(and Liszt) were severely called over the coals by some of the ultra-conservative critics, as witness the following :

Liszt's pot-pourri, made out of the Polacca and Polonaise of Weber, is one of those things which ought never to be admitted into a programme of classical music, and it is difficult to understand why a musician like Mr. Walter Bache should have thought proper to introduce it. Shade of his brother !—a true musician if there ever was one.

In the summer he had paid a special visit to Rome to see Liszt again, of which the following account may be quoted :—

TO HIS SISTER.

Florence,

September 7, Monday, 1874.

DEAREST MAGGIE,

I returned here yesterday morning, and found yours and Alfred's most pleasant letters awaiting me. I arrived at Rome on Sunday morning August 30. In the afternoon I had the great pleasure of seeing Liszt. I had rather dreaded it, as I would rather never have seen him again than have found him ageing (mentally), or have perceived any falling off in his playing. I ventured to tell him afterwards that this reason has kept me from visiting him for so many years,

and that now I shall go to him regularly every year. He is the *same as ever*, although he was last winter completely broken down by the fearful work and bothers of Pesth : his teeth are going a little, and this sometimes slightly affects his pronunciation ; but this is the only difference I notice. He played a great deal to me—several hours every day—as *magnificently as ever* ; as Bülow said, all the pianists are “dumme Jungen” as compared with him ! He played Beethoven Sonata Op. 70, three Chopin Polonaises, several Mazurkas, some things of Bach, and works of Bülow, Dräseke,¹ etc. On Monday we went a long drive together—Coliseum, St. Peter’s, etc. On Tuesday—with Pinner, an American pupil, a first-rate fellow, and Dr. Blum, a German pupil—we removed to Tivoli, four hours’ drive. Liszt lives at the Villa d’Este, an enormous uninhabited villa with a splendid view of the Campagna. We lived at the hotel, and went to Liszt every morning at about eleven, when he played to us till one, when we all dined together ; then we visited him again at about six and stayed till 8.30 with him.

I told him about C.’s translations, and he said it was a difficult task, and that there might be cases in which it would be preferable to alter the music, rather than to sacrifice the proper accent or declamation.

I told him I had given up my notions of living abroad, and was determined to do my best in

¹ Herr Felix Dräseke ; composer and musical writer.

England ; and he said that he only met dissatisfied people ; the man who lives in Leipzig thinks that his talents would find more scope in St. Petersburg, etc., whereas everyone in time can *create* a more or less musical atmosphere around them if they will put their shoulders to the wheel, instead of grumbling ; he instanced Mme. Laussot, who has, in fifteen years only, done so much in Florence, the most unmusical place perhaps on the face of the globe. . . .

Confound ——'s youthful ardour ! I have *so often* myself suffered from the same complaint, and been very near spoiling my chances of doing good in the Liszt cause by violent letters against Mr. Davison and Co.,¹ but fortunately I can't write, and these fellows can ; many a letter have I addressed to the Editor of the *Musical Record* and many a stinging notice have I prepared for my programmes ; and then—put it in the fire. These blessed paper controversies make bad blood, and do no good—one must work by actions.

Only once, as far as I am aware, did Bache himself sin in this respect, but—curiously enough—it was quite shortly after he wrote the above letter. The Weber-Liszt Polacca having been sharply attacked by some of the critics, Bache, who would have scorned to notice their criticisms

¹ Meaning the press critics in general.

had they been directed against himself only, was stung by the flagrant injustice shown towards Liszt, and inserted some caustic, though very apposite, remarks in the programme of his next orchestral concert (1875), showing how the same thing for which Liszt had been so unmercifully pulled to pieces—namely, the re-arrangement in a different form by one master of the work of another master—had been done by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, and many others, without adverse comment ; thus proving that there was a good deal of animus against Liszt personally in the aforementioned criticisms.

Liszt's Thirteenth Psalm was repeated on this occasion, Bache having secured the co-operation of his friend and master, Bülow, as conductor. The writer of these pages, who was one of the chorus, can bear testimony to the marvellously magnetic power of Bülow over his orchestra and chorus. He seemed to possess the faculty of beckoning forth their voices, and literally *made* them sing. The concert-giver played Liszt's Second Concerto in A major for the first time at his own concerts ; it had been introduced to England by Mr. Dannreuther at the Crystal Palace three months previously. Bache also played it about this period at one of the Albert Hall concerts. Writing to one of his brothers

some months afterwards, in reference to this concert, he said :—

My concert was (to everyone's surprise) a most heavy loss : expenses between £230 and £250—receipts £110! Bülow *insists* on paying £50 towards the loss. This ought to be known : he conducted also for nothing. So I shall soon get all right again. The concert was perhaps the most magnificent performance that has ever been given in London ; Bülow was delighted with the orchestra ; the hall was respectably filled (many orders), and the audience most enthusiastic. Bülow was really pleased with me, and altogether I did my best.

This year began the rehearsals, at Bayreuth, for the contemplated performance of Wagner's " Ring des Nibelungen " in 1876. Writing from that place on August 8 to his sister, Bache said :—

There are two rehearsals every day here : in the morning from 10 to 1 orchestral rehearsal ; in the afternoon from 5 to 7 the same music is repeated with the singers. They have just finished the second act of " Siegfried " : taking one act each day they will finish on Thursday. I shall then go to see Klindworth for one day, and then to Munich, where I must practise hard, and try in the remaining three weeks of holiday to do what I had set myself for the six weeks. . . . Liszt is here, and is as charming and good as ever ; he is

playing just as he did ten years ago. We are invited to Wagner's house every evening, and we go three or four times every week: Liszt is living there. Altogether these two weeks are perhaps the most eventful I shall ever see—unless indeed the performances next year. The town is very beautiful, and the theatre about half a mile distant in the most lovely country: the invisible orchestra and conductor will certainly give a reality to the performances of which we can form no idea.

In February 1876, Bache gave, for the first time at his concerts, Liszt's Oratorio "The Legend of St. Elizabeth." A performance of this work had been given in London some six years previously; but, in spite of first-rate singers (Tietjens and Stockhausen) it had been so indifferently done that it does not count for much; and to all intents and purposes therefore the present occasion may be regarded as its real introduction. With an orchestra of 70, and a chorus of 175, Mrs. Osgood in the title-rôle, and the concert-giver as conductor, the work went beautifully, and made a great success.

In the previous October Liszt had written to Bache as follows:—

With regard to the "Elizabeth" performance (at your "Twelfth Annual Concert" on February 24) I am somewhat anxious on account of the great

exertions and expense which the performance will entail upon you. Still I will not make any further objection to your characteristically firm *incorrigibility* in your steadfast wish and endeavour to do the *utmost possible* for the good of your old friend, now sixty-four years of age.

And, on March 8, 1876, he wrote again as follows :—

HONOURED AND DEAR FRIEND,

You, in your London "Annual Concerts," have for twelve years worked more wonders than I was able to compose in the "Rosenwunder"¹ of "Elizabeth." Hearty thanks for your account of the 12th concert, and all the exertions connected with it!

I beg you to present my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Osgood ("Elizabeth"). . . .

Entirely approving of the use of the *mute* in the passage



and during the chorus of angels, remains, in sincere esteem for the steadfast conductor and friend Walter Bache, his faithful and grateful

F. LISZT.²

¹ Alluding to the "Rose Miracle" in the Oratorio.

² "Letters of Franz Liszt," vol. ii., p. 295. London: Grevel and Co., King Street, Covent Garden.

Bache wrote the following postcard to his faithful friend Mme. Laussot:—

March 1, 1876.

"Elizabeth" very successful, and a *really first-rate* performance. Dr. Hueffer,¹ who has heard it four times in Germany, had never heard it so well. Chorus (185) splendid—orchestra the best in London—Mrs. Osgood really beautiful—full hall—deficit of more than £200. I send you a specimen of London criticism which will amuse you ; the other papers are all in the same style.

In the month of August began the first Wagner performances at Bayreuth. A year beforehand Liszt had written thus to a friend :—

The performances (announced for the month of August, '76) of the Tetralogy, "Der Ring des Nibelungen," will be the chief event of dramatic art, thus royally made manifest for the first time in this century in its ensemble and unification of Poetry, Music, Acting, and their decorations of Painting and *mise-en-scène*.

There is not merely the chance, but the guarantee of a grand and striking success, in view of the sublimity of the work itself, and also of the enthusiasm it already excites amongst the numerous staff of artists chosen to interpret it. In spite of the difficulties of this new transcendental style of

¹ Dr. Francis Hueffer, 1845-1889 ; musical writer, author and translator ; critic of the *Times* from 1878 till his death.

Wagner, the preparatory study and rehearsals are an enchantment for the singers and the musicians of the orchestra.

The renown of these performances has long ago spread far and wide ; but at that date it was a very different thing ; any renown they then had, in England, at least, was a notoriety of scoffs and jeers ; and the comparatively few devotees who joined in them in unfashionable 1876 were looked upon as harmless lunatics. Bache of course was amongst the latter ; but, owing to the excitement and repleteness of those three Festival weeks, there was but little time to spend in letter-writing, and consequently there are no letters of his to hand on this great event. From a private account, written by a young enthusiast who was present, a few particulars are culled which may be of interest, even now when all the world has been there.

Monday, August 7, 11 p.m. When it seemed that we were approaching Bayreuth I looked out for the first glimpse of the town, and on one side all was darkness ; on the other a blaze of light from a strange-looking building, which has already been depicted many a time and oft on paper, but which my mortal eyes now beheld in reality for the first time. Certainly as far as the outside of the theatre is concerned, the most favourable view of it is that which I had, when the mere outline of the building is thrown into relief against the night sky by the

bright lights burning around ; for by daylight it is but an ugly red-brick place after all.

On Sunday and Monday were the public rehearsals of "Rheingold" and "Die Walküre," and on Tuesday of "Siegfried." On Tuesday, August 8, therefore, I entered for the first time the building so often dreamt of, the place so long wished for. The rehearsal was quite full, and in the dim gaslight could be discerned more than one friendly face. By and by I see a massive head with long white hair hanging all round, and Liszt comes in. Afterwards I had many opportunities of seeing him nearer, while we strolled about between the acts. The first sight is rather disappointing, after the grand-looking photographs, to see an old man with a shabby hat and an almost shambling gait. Wagner was all about, trotting among his actors and talking to them during the breathing-time in between.

We walked home from the theatre in the moonlight, and the next night went to the rehearsal of "Götterdämmerung." I was surprised to find that, although people had to pay a good price for this last rehearsal, the theatre was just as full as on the previous night, when the entrance was free. The performance was the most magnificent piece of tragedy I have ever seen, but I shall speak of the operas each in turn, when I have seen the regular performances, as these were only the rehearsals.¹

¹ Any account of the performances is naturally omitted here, as they are now so universally familiar. The above deals only with a few details and first impressions.

On Thursday Wagner holds receptions, to which everyone who is invited ought to go. These are generally crowded of course.

Friday, August 11, we went to see the Wagner Theatre, where we had been told we might go about and look behind the scenes. This was most interesting, for, though in some ways it may spoil the illusion, still it is so helpful for gaining some idea of the enormous size and the innumerable appliances of Wagner's theatre that it is worth while losing (if it should prove so) a little of the illusion to get the knowledge. I, for one, could hardly have believed, if I had not seen it, that the stage is actually larger than the auditorium. But now I have stood upon Wagner's stage myself, have been to the very back, and all across, seen the invisible orchestra, and looked up into the vast height of the scenic arrangements above; and I come away more than ever filled with admiration for the wonderful genius which not only wrote the words and music—music which in itself seems sometimes more than earthly—but which also conceived, and has carried into execution, every little detail that goes to make these performances the grandest, the most thoroughly perfect, that this age has witnessed, or will perhaps ever witness again.

After leaving the theatre, we drove to the "Eremitage," a lovely pleasure resort a few miles off, where there is a château: here last week King Ludwig of Bavaria, the Wagner enthusiast, was staying in order to attend the rehearsals. There

was always some excitement to see him enter his box, which no one could ever succeed in doing, as he never came in until the last, and, at the moment of his entering, the lights were gradually lowered, so that all that the eager public could behold of royalty was a dark shadow passing quietly through the rows of the "Fürsten Loge." He shuns publicity, and being an enthusiastic admirer of Wagner likes to be able to enjoy his operas with the peace and quiet of a private individual. After the rehearsals he left Bayreuth, and I do not yet know whether he will return for the performances.

Saturday, August 12, the streets, which had been decorated with garlands and bunting a week ago for King Ludwig's entrance, were refurbished up for the coming of the Emperor of Germany and the Emperor of Brazil, who both arrived in the afternoon.

We had one or two jolly evenings after the second Ring cycle, supping at the Wagner Restauration;—just a delightful little party—Professor and Mrs. Klindworth, Frau Professor Cornelius,¹ Bache and his sister, Messrs. Frits Hartvigson, Pinner (a pupil of Liszt's, a nice and very clever little American), and some Poles, friends of the Klindworths; also, and not least, Signor Buonamici.

Monday, August 21, I called for Bache at

¹ The widow of Peter Cornelius; see note 2, p. 257.

10 o'clock to go and call upon Liszt; and on this memorable day therefore I entered "Wahnfried" for the first time.

We were shown into the hall, an oblong room with a door at each end, and another opposite the entrance, which is in one of the long sides of the oblong. In one corner a small organ, in the three others lounges, and in the centre a handsome grand pianoforte, sent by Steinway of New York as a "Festspiel" present to Wagner, as stated on the inscription inside it.

Round the walls are frescoes from the "Nibelungen Lied"; and up above runs a gallery or landing, belonging no doubt to the private rooms of the house. On each side of the door leading to Wagner's study are marble busts of Wagner and Cosima, his wife, and round the hall are arranged, also on pedestals, marble statuettes of the heroes of his different operas—"Lohengrin," "Tannhäuser," "Tristan," "Walther von Stolzing," the "Fliegender Holländer," and "Siegfried." Of these the most lovely in attitude and expression is Siegfried. He is standing, as it were, in the happiest moment of his triumph; he holds in one hand the fatal ring, which he has just received as a love-token from Brünnhilde; and, with helmet on his head, he is prepared to go forth on new adventures. The tragedy that is to follow is yet undreamt of; the figure looks full of light and grace, and a wonderful amount of expression has been worked into the cold marble. So we might almost hear Brünnhilde's words, as she speeds him

onward:—"Zu neuen Thaten, theurer Helde"; and "O wär Brünnhild deine Seele!"

I had time to look at the statuettes, as we were kept waiting some minutes before being finally shown into the room on the left of the hall. This room, I believe, is Cosima's boudoir; it is very elegant, with settees and screens and pretty things all about, the walls hung with yellow satin damask. This seems to be Liszt's special room when he is here; a writing table, grand piano open, papers scattered about, all betoken his presence.

There were about half a dozen other people waiting to see him. M. Saint-Saëns¹ came and, as Liszt wanted to show him some things, he played just a little; but yet I can hardly boast that I have heard Liszt *play*, as this was merely "tapoter du piano." We stayed there about an hour; and when we came away I said what a pleasure it had been to hear him play—that it had always been my great wish; and he was most kind, and said that, if we would go again on a day when there was no performance at the Wagner Theatre, he would play to us more and better. This, alas, we did not venture to do, as poor Liszt was so beset by callers, so importuned during the whole time, that he was quite tired, and Bache thought we ought not to go again.

On Wednesday night, the finale of finales, the close of the third and last series of performances,

¹ Dr. Charles Camille Saint-Saëns, born in Paris; pianist, organist, and especially composer of celebrity.

a truly irrepressible outburst of feeling followed the drawing of the curtains, and a shout for Wagner, to which, after some delay, he responded by appearing on the boards in front of the great curtains. Bouquets and wreaths were flung to him from all sides; and after the cheers had subsided he spoke a few words, in that somewhat sad, earnest, not over-hopeful tone of voice, which would seem to tell of great aims, great disappointments. He spoke of the event which had brought numbers from far and near, with a touch of sadness as he expressed a doubt whether this event could take place again. He spoke too of the devotion of those men and women who had aided him so nobly to bring his great Life-Dream to the light of day; and as he spoke of them the curtains drew back, and we beheld once more all those actors and actresses who had taken us, for the last several weeks, into another life—into a dream-life created by the one Master-spirit before us.

On Thursday evening, August 31, Wagner held his last reception at his own house, and to this I went with Bache. It seemed like a dream when I heard him tell the coachman to drive to "Wahnfried"! Though there had been receptions every week after the performances, this was the first to which I had been; it was therefore a glorious ending to a month of such happiness as can come only once in a life—a never-to-be-forgotten, real day-dream.

We found our way into the study, the largest room of all, opposite the entrance door. Here we made our way to Mme. Wagner, who received their guests. Wagner, like Gallio, "cared for none of those things," and troubled himself only about a few. Liszt was also there, and I had the *last hope* of hearing him play once more; but, alas, he was very tired, and vanished quite early. The study is a large and lofty room, I should imagine about two-thirds of the length of the house. A large bow window at the end, grand piano, screens and lounges, easels and paintings artistically arranged around; on one of the easels a painting of Schopenhauer. A splendid library of books; above them, and over the doors, paintings of Liszt, Wagner, Beethoven, etc. Tables filled with interesting trophies to Liszt or Wagner, medals, etc.

In the room to the right of the front door supper was laid; and here there was one amusing curiosity in the shape of a large cake presented to Wagner by Wilhelmj.¹ It was one of the large flat round cakes that appear on every German table on Sundays and grand occasions, and had been specially sent for by Wilhelmj for this occasion from I do not know how far away: it had been made to his order with two little birds at the top, and at the bottom a few bars of the "bird motive" from "Siegfried"; this cake caused great amusement.

¹ Mr. Auguste Wilhelmj; the celebrated violinist; now a resident Professor in London. He was the leader of the Bayreuth orchestra that year.

Before we left, the Steinway Grand in the hall was opened, and a gentleman sang the exquisite tenor solo from "Die Walküre" :

"Winterstürme wichen
Dem Wonnemond."

Then what a caste we had ! Betz was Wotan ; Niemann was Siegmund ; Hill and Schlosser respectively Alberich and Mime ; Siegfried was played by Unger, at that time a young débutant, and a young giant into the bargain ! Gura was Gunther, Vogl was Loge, and what a Loge ! those who saw him then will never forget. He just brought down the house—that is to say, he would have done, had applause been permitted. Materna played Brünnhilde—her glorious singing and imposing presence and dignity unsurpassable. Besides these, there were Fräulein Scheffsky and Fräulein Weckerlin ; Frau Jachmann-Wagner (niece of the "Meister"), and many others.

How few are left today ! Frau Jachmann-Wagner, Vogl, Schlosser and Unger are all dead ; Materna and Niemann honourably retired ; the veteran Gura still before the public.

"Adieu, charmant pays ! Tempora mutantur."

X

LONDON (*continued*)

1877

IT was somewhere about this period that Walter Bache left his old quarters in Great Russell Street, and went to live at 42, Upper Gloucester Place. He had for some time taken up riding, both as a pastime, and still more as a necessary recreation and change from the sedentary life of a Professor. At the riding-school of Mr. Frederick Allen he had not only had the advantage of this master's lessons, but he had, in addition, formed ties of warm friendship with him; and when circumstances brought about a change of residence he took up his abode with Mr. and Mrs. Allen. Here he remained many years, and probably would never have left them, had not they themselves been changing their home. Many pleasant holidays he also passed at their country farm at Kingsbury,

where he frequently retired when he wanted a piano, a horse, a pipe and a book, and immunity from his fellow-men. This friendship was a life-long one, and he made Mr. Allen his executor.

Bache's orchestral concert, in February of this year, was again an event of musical importance. At the end of 1876 Mr. Manns had given Liszt's Symphonic Poem, "Mazeppa," at the Crystal Palace; and Bache took the occasion to repeat this at his own concert, the reasons for which are explained in the following letter, written eighteen months afterwards:—

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

August 26, 1878.

A thousand thanks for your most generous offer, which I *can't* accept. Firstly, I am not yet sure about doing "Ideale," as I now think that for an English public and English orchestra "Hungaria"¹ should come first: I have pressed this very strongly on Manns, and shall probably be guided by what he does: the Crystal Palace will only perform a work "for the first time" in England. So I do more for Liszt's music by giving a second performance of a work which they have done once with scanty rehearsals, than by forcing a new work. And, in this case, I should get Manns to conduct. . . . His "Mazeppa"

¹ This work was given for the first time in England at a Philharmonic concert in February 1882.

performance was *superb* at my concert : both he and his orchestra had thus had time to get thoroughly at home in it.

To the same friend he sent a postcard, a few days after the above concert, as follows:—

“Mazeppa” splendid. Manns (formerly a fiddler himself) worked with the violin players like a nigger, fingering and editing all difficult passages : strings quite sufficient for the brass. Manns enthusiastic : *a really magnificent* performance. It quite took my breath away. It is one of Liszt’s very grandest works : but can’t often be performed, requiring so many rehearsals, such a large stringed orchestra, and a conductor who has been a violinist. Damrosch¹ might do it, but no one could better than Manns. Klindworth’s instrumentation *lovely*. Receipts £110—expenses £280——— ! 95 in orchestra.

“Klindworth’s instrumentation” refers to the Chopin F minor P. F. Concerto, played, in addition to Liszt’s A major Concerto, by the concert-giver. On this occasion was also heard, for the first time with orchestral accompaniment, Liszt’s “Loreley,” in which Mrs. Osgood’s light bell-like soprano told with charming effect. The

¹ Dr. Leopold Damrosch, 1832-1885 ; took his degree as doctor of medicine, which career he afterwards abandoned for that of music ; violinist and conductor ; best known in the latter capacity in New York, whither he went in 1871.

“Préludes,” which has ever been the most popular of Liszt’s Symphonic Poems, because the most frequently heard and the easiest to understand, was also repeated.

It would appear that Mme. Laussot had suggested a work of Bülow’s for one of Bache’s next concerts, eliciting the following reply :—

TO MME. LAUSSOT.

Upper Gloucester Place,
October 14, 1877.

I perfectly agree with every word in your last letter about Bülow, but nevertheless can’t carry out your wishes, which are also mine. My next concert (February 19) must be a cheap one with one rehearsal: so nothing new will be done. You will get the programme in a few days. In 1879, if I have money, it *must be* the Faust Symphony. Liszt is the most ill-used genius the world ever saw. All are ungrateful to him. No Wagner, Bülow, Joachim, or Klindworth would be here but for Liszt. Liszt’s music has marked a step in non-theatrical music: Bülow’s will have no after-influence. So it must and shall be Liszt first (after Bayreuth) with me: if ever I get money enough for anything else, then I will do what you suggest, and what I should like. But I lose courage with my abominable fellow-creatures! That a magnificent performance of Liszt’s Faust Symphony under Bülow’s, Klindworth’s or Richter’s

direction, can't be given without a certain loss of £200 is "demnition hard."

The programme for February 19, 1878, included Beethoven's Fifth Concerto, and Liszt's wonderful piece of tone-painting, the *Fantasia on Hungarian Melodies*, for the concert-giver, with Mr. Manns again at the conductor's desk; a repetition of "Orpheus" (for orchestra); solos for piano; Liszt's "Scène dramatique, Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher," set to words of Alexandre Dumas, and finely interpreted by Miss Anna Williams.¹ "By desire" some lovely vocal duetts of Peter Cornelius,² which Bache had given at his Recital two years previously, were repeated.

A word here apropos of Cornelius. Until some of his chamber compositions were introduced to London by Bache, this really great composer was almost unknown here, even by name. Yet in Germany, a quarter of a century earlier, Liszt had thrown down his bâton and thrown up his position in Weimar for the sake of Cornelius. It is an old story now, and need not be recalled here, but it serves up as apropos in 1901 as it did at the

¹ Miss Anna Williams, the well-known concert and oratorio singer; now Professor at the Royal College of Music.

² Peter Cornelius, 1824-1874; author, composer and Professor; one of the chief adherents of the "New German School," and thrown into the closest relations with Liszt, Wagner, Bülow, etc.

time of its occurrence, for unfortunately we are still as apt as we then were to overlook the pure gold, and to be satisfied with the alloy. Suffice it to say that Cornelius has left behind him a wealth of exquisite song and poetry—for he was usually his own librettist—besides three operas, for a future generation of English to enjoy and appreciate, if the present fails to do so. For, like so many really great composers, Cornelius passed away without general recognition. Wagner passed through all the throes of unrecognised genius, and had to wait long for his triumph, but it did come in his life-time; Liszt, the noble, the self-abnegating, had to wait far longer; and Cornelius, that genial composer and single-minded man, the longest of all, for, except among the very few, his fame has been posthumous *only*.

The genius of Cornelius's works was fully recognised by Bache, and had he been on the look-out only for the beautiful, from whatsoever source, I think there is little doubt that he would have introduced more of this Master's compositions; but he had early set himself one work in life, one goal to attain, and from that work and that goal he swerved neither to the right nor to the left. He has been heard to say, in respect to other and more popular composers than Liszt, "there are plenty of people always ready to bring

out *their* works, therefore those I can leave." At the same time he gave sufficient specimens of Cornelius to whet people's appetite for more; as, for instance, at his Recital in 1880, when he introduced (I believe for the first time in England) that series of tender and delicate tone-poems entitled "Christmas Songs," Op. 8.

In respect to his concert just mentioned, he thus criticises it to his Florence friend :—

Concert musically very successful, I think. "Orpheus" sounded lovely, and pleased very much—much more than it did some years ago, even when conducted by Bülow; which shows that British intelligence, so low in politics, is improving in matters musical. "Jeanne d'Arc" most effective with orchestra: singer really unwell, or it would have been still better. I played my best; Ballade and Rhapsodie (of course) pleased: "Paysage" not at all. Expenses nearly £200—receipts £67 os. 6d.

On the much vexed question of touting for subscribers to concerts, or getting friends to take tickets, he held the strongest opinions, which it may not be amiss to quote, as he acted up to his own principles on this point throughout the whole of his career.

Writing to Mme. Laussot in July 1878, he said :—

O my dear Grandmother, save me from these travelling virtuosi, —, —, etc.: if you know a good circus-rider or Punch-and-Judy man, send him to me: but these others are *beggars* of the deepest *Unverschämtheit*. Old Z—— first wants me to write him a newspaper notice, which *he* would get inserted in the *Morning Post*. Then he wants me to send some of my pupils to his *matinée* (tickets one guinea): when my pupils can hear Piatti and Lasserre¹ for one shilling why should they pay a guinea for Z——? Let these people teach Cramer or Czerny or play in the orchestra, and I will help them if I get a chance. But the travelling virtuoso, who is a gentleman, does not exist any more, except in about three instances.

Preparing for his next orchestral concert, he wrote as follows to his friend Mr. C. A. Barry (see also Part I., p. 84):—

January 3, 1879.

At my next concert, February 25, besides "Mazeppa," I shall give Bülow's "Des Sängers Fluch," and Liszt's "Rhapsodie Hongroise" for Orchestra, No. 4 in D and G, dedicated to Graf Teleki. . . . Now could you make me a little short analysis of each, with a few musical quotations, on one stave when possible, for people to take home with them?

1st. As regards Bülow's work: I have permission from the Glasgow people to reprint their

¹ Another eminent violoncellist.

translation of Uhland's ballade, which was used at Campbell's concert : but I want also a few musical quotations, strung together with as few remarks as possible. Why I keep on bothering about brevity is that I so often see people reading the analysis instead of listening to the music, and I want to give them little to read, merely a few landmarks to assist them in a strange composition. Shall I send you Campbell's programme with translation?

2nd. As regards Liszt's Rhapsodie : three or four musical quotations will suffice : the title-page says "instrumented by Liszt and Doppler." Now Doppler was a flute player who did arrange some of these P. F. Rhapsodies for orchestra. So when Liszt published the set of six (I think) at Schuberth's, he very generously put Doppler's name on the title out of compliment to him ; but Doppler had nothing to do with them. If you like to mention this characteristic of Liszt's kindness, do so ; but don't mention my authority for it, which is Liszt himself. . . .

From this date onwards the familiar "C. A. B." initials appeared on most of the analytical notices for Bache's concerts, as they have so long done on those for Richter and the Crystal Palace.

Bülow's descriptive Ballad, "Des Sängers Fluch," was given on this occasion, February 25, 1879, for the second (and I fear up to the present date the last) time in London. "Mazeppa" was repeated, necessitating an increase in the orchestra,

on account of its heavy scoring. Other interesting works completed the programme, but do not call for special remark here.

Bache's criticism to his friend in Florence followed as usual :—

“Mazeppa” was an *enormous* success : it went with even more freedom and *Virtuosität* than two years ago. The audience wanted it again, and would not be quiet until Manns made a speech, saying it was impossible to repeat it. Bülow's work had been tremendously rehearsed by Manns, and went splendidly : with utmost freedom and intelligence. . . . Expenses about £280 : receipts about £100.

One of the London critiques of this concert closes a long and appreciative notice with the following remarks :—

Mr. Manns was recalled three times, and then Mr. Bache had to respond to calls that would not be denied, and the audience fairly roared at him. Never was applause more deserved. Mr. Bache has done an incalculable benefit to the cause of music in his persistent efforts to make known the works of the modern German school. We may with just pride reflect that it is an Englishman who has earned this debt of gratitude from English and German alike in the musical world of England.

This summer (1879) Bache's holiday alternated between the snow-capped mountains of Tyrol, and

Munich, for performances of the "Ring," "Lohengrin," etc., varied by a little trip to Kufstein to meet, and travel back with, Liszt, then on his way to Rome. Bache was utilizing his holidays, as he invariably did, to prepare for his next campaign; and this year it was Liszt's "Faust Symphony" that was the special *cheval de bataille*. It was given, for the first time in England, at his next concert on March 11, 1880. That he had the performance of this work perhaps more deeply at heart than that of any other composition of Liszt's may be gathered from a letter, probably the last, he wrote to his friend in Florence, and which, under date January 25, 1888, is quoted on p. 315. Curiously too this work was the very last he ever gave, and the final occasion on which he appeared in public, just two months before his death.

In June 1880 he made his first appearance at the Richter concerts, in the rather unusual rôle of organist in Liszt's Symphonic Poem, "Die Hunnenschlacht." The following year he played Chopin's F minor Concerto (with Klindworth's scoring) at one of the Richter concerts, and in 1883 he was again the pianist in the concert of June 4, at which he appeared in Beethoven's Choral Fantasia.

The quotation (a few pages back) of receipts and expenditure makes it a matter of no surprise

that he was obliged to give himself a year's rest from orchestral concerts, to enable him to recover from the heavy monetary losses he had incurred through them. At the end of the programme of his 1880 Recital, therefore, he announced his intention of giving only Recitals in 1881, and of repeating the "Faust Symphony" the following year. Accordingly in March 1882 he resumed the orchestral concerts, and led off with a thoroughly characteristic programme of three works only, all for orchestra : Liszt's "Goethe Fest-Marsch" ; the "Tanz in der Dorfschenke," better known as the "Mephisto-Walzer," performed by the Richter orchestra, for the first time in England, the previous May ; and the "Faust Symphony," for the second time at these concerts. The *Athenæum*, commenting on the first performance of Liszt's "Faust Symphony," contained the following remarks :—

Mr. Walter Bache's annual concert always ranks as one of the most important events of the musical season. Unlike most concerts given by professors of music, at which the *bénéficiaire* relies upon the assistance of a few vocalists or instrumentalists, that of Mr. Bache has for some years past been orchestral. At a heavy pecuniary outlay, and expecting an almost certain loss, the concert-giver, with truly artistic devotion, continues to labour for the sake of music, and to

bring forward works never to be heard elsewhere, with the utmost possible completeness.

Mr. Bache is well known as a pupil, and, we may add, as the self-constituted apostle, of Liszt. Year after year he brings to a hearing the compositions of his master, many of which, but for his exertions, would be altogether unknown here; and, undaunted by the coolness with which some of them have been received, he perseveres in his self-imposed mission with a heroism which it is impossible not to admire. At St. James's Hall, last Thursday week, he produced for the first time in England a work considered by many to be Liszt's master-piece—the "Faust Symphony". . . . Many will doubtless be ready to endorse our decided conviction that the symphony is one of the most remarkable and interesting works of modern times.

The *Times*, in a long sketch of the symphony, included the following appreciative remarks of the concert-giver :—

Mr. Bache, as our readers are aware, is a faithful disciple of Liszt, and to the propagation of that Master's fame, much more than to the display of his own skill as a pianist, his concerts are usually devoted. It is, indeed, very doubtful whether, without Mr. Bache's unselfish and energetic endeavours, much of Liszt's music would have been heard in this country; and to him London amateurs mainly owe their acquaintance

with one of the most extraordinary artistic individualities of modern times.

After an interval of six years, Bayreuth emerged from her retirement once more. With ardour undimmed, with powers undiminished, undismayed by sneers, undaunted by hostile criticism, Wagner came forth with his last, and—as some of us think—his greatest, masterpiece. On July 26, 1882, the first public performance of “Parsifal” took place, and these were continued three times weekly until August 29. Bache’s report of it is included in the two following letters:—

TO MME. HILLEBRAND (FORMERLY MME.
LAUSSOT).

Bei Herrn Bergamtmann Hahn,
Rennweg, Bayreuth,
July 28, 10 a.m.

MY DEAREST GRANDMOTHER,

I promised an account of “Parsifal,” but cannot keep my word; the whole thing seemed like a dream to me: most *wonderful*, but at present bewildering by its great beauty. The impression one receives is so entirely different from that of any other Wagner work. “Parsifal” stands quite alone: nothing else can be in any way compared with it. I feel certain that, when I am sufficiently familiar with the music to form a distinct opinion, I shall worship it; but at present I rather delight

in the vague general impression. The performance was as perfect as anything in this world can be: it was such a one as can only be obtained, I imagine, under the personal direction of Wagner. The scenery and transformations surpass anything I have ever seen. All further particulars you will see in the papers I sent yesterday.

I saw dear Liszt yesterday: he looks so young again, and fresh, and indeed quite jovial: I did not stay long, and of course others were there; so we did not speak of you. Is he not noble? He does the honours of Wagner's house from morning to night, and may not play the piano because Wagner can't stand it—(so they say, at least). Yesterday afternoon he was going to give a lesson to five pupils!!!! Lippi is here: Buonamici comes on August 10: Ritter not here yet. Humberti (?) (from Antwerp) is here, and sends you many messages: I shall be here till August 8. No news of Bülow, to whom I wrote yesterday, but Liszt said he *might* come here. I gave Bülow your address. My very best remembrances to Dr. Hillebrand. I hope you have less rain in Lowestoft than we have here: all the *Tonkünstler* who have left their umbrellas behind them look preciously miserable!

Ever your loving affectionate

UNCLE.

And, on July 30:—

Excuse a hurried note: Bülow writes from Meiningen that, health permitting, he hopes to come here for August 6.

2nd. The second "Parsifal" performance has made a most stupendous and convincing impression on all of us: assuredly Wagner never created anything grander.

3rd. Liszt is *so well* and youthful: this morning at eight I was still in bed (reading "Nana") when in he walked: how ashamed I was!

Buonamici comes soon: no signs of Ritter. Some of the last performances will be suppressed, they say, and a big deficit will probably result. What a scandal!

Best remembrances to Dr. Hillebrand. Rain and cold.

In a letter to his friend Dr. von Bülow he says:—

It would be ridiculous for me to speak of the work itself, except to say that the impression it conveys is entirely different from that of any other Wagner work. Of course after a first performance I merely feel dazzled and bewildered, and very thankful that I am alive to hear and see such wonders. The performance, as far as I could judge, was marvellous; the greatest duffers under Wagner's direction would do wonders: but then we had Materna—Kundry, Reichmann—Amfortas, Scaria—Gurnemanz, Kindermann—Titurel, Hill—Klingsor, and Winkelmann—Parsifal; perhaps Materna, Scaria and Hill were the most admirable, but all were good.

The *Blumenmädchen* splendid in voices and action, men's chorus equally good, orchestra (Levi)

of course good ; the stage-action I suppose we shall never see so perfect till the Lord sends another Wagner. The scenery was *gorgeous*, and the difficult transformations were most marvellous. I never saw anything so good and impressive : and *what a thing* the concealed orchestra is, and a darkened auditorium ! Without these helps a real illusion is impossible. After the solemn ending of Act I. the *idiots* began to applaud ; and after Act II. they began again : then Wagner from his box requested them to abstain from applause : but after Act III. he permitted them to applaud the artists, which they did for about ten minutes : however, no one appeared, till at last Wagner himself came on the stage, and said that the singers had “ gone home.”

Liszt's own report of the Bayreuth Festival is contained in the following concise note :—

TO FREIHERR HANS VON WOLZOGEN.

Bayreuth,

July 27, 1882.

MY DEAR FREIHERR,

Both at and after yesterday's performance of Wagner's “ Parsifal ” it was the universal feeling that about this *wonder-work* it is impossible to speak. It has indeed struck dumb those who were so deeply impressed by it ; its sacred pendulum swings from the sublime to the sublimest.

Yours ever,

F. LISZT.

The cast this year was as follows:—

Parsifal was played in turn by Gudehus, Jäger and Winkelmann; Amfortas always by Reichmann; Gurnemanz alternately by Scaria and Siehr; Klingsor always by Hill; and Kundry by Materna, Malten and Marianne Brandt.

On leaving Bayreuth, Bache went directly to Weimar, where he spent the remainder of his holidays in close vicinity to, and intercourse with, Liszt. This appears to have been his first visit to Weimar; but from this date he went there almost every year until the Master's death.

Liszt's celebrated "class" has often been heard of, and has been delightfully described by Borodin,¹ the Russian composer, who was a welcome visitor there. Every musician of note, who found himself in the neighbourhood of Weimar, was in the habit of attending these so-called "lessons." The pupils were many of them the foremost pianists of the time: some played one day, some another, but each one was tacitly expected to come prepared to take his turn at the piano whensoever the Master might choose to ask him. If anyone came badly prepared, or who had studied in a bad school, the vials of the Master's wrath were poured out upon

¹ See "Alexandre Borodine," by Vladimir Stasoff, or its English translation, "Borodin and Liszt," by Rosa Newmarch.

him. Not that he burst forth into violent anger, but rather that the few words of withering sarcasm he let fall made the unhappy "pupil" desire, then and there, a miracle on his own behalf, whereby he might be enabled to sink through the floor, and be no more heard of. It may be imagined that the ordeal of playing, not only before Liszt himself, but also before all that was best in the musical world, was no small one. In a letter to Herr von Bülow, Bache thus describes one of these meetings:—

This is my first visit to Weimar, and I am enjoying it tremendously; Liszt is so very kind to me, and is looking so very well and youthful: indeed it is a pleasure which I did not expect to have again in this world. The "twenty-four" pupils come to him three times a week, from 4 o'clock to about 6.30: there are some really first-rate players amongst them; for instance, I heard yesterday admirably played the Tausig-Strauss Valses in A, the piece by Balakireff¹ which you once played in London, and a very good performance of the second Sonata of Chopin. There are some duffers amongst the ladies, and indeed some who deserve another visit and kicking downstairs from yourself. Liszt often plays himself; and indeed, to anyone who has learned in your school *how to practise*, I can't imagine

¹ Mily Alexiewitch Balakireff; a Russian composer of the "New School."

anything more improving than these meetings. I never was more nervous than at having to play before Liszt and the twenty-three colleagues: I don't think I need fear any public after this.

In an account, from another source, of one of the receptions at "Wahnfried" this year, occurs the following mention of Herr Siegfried Wagner:—

I spoke to little Siegfried, who is a pale and rather interesting-looking little fellow of perhaps ten years or so.

Early in 1883 the musical world was convulsed by the shock of Wagner's sudden death at Venice. He had gone thither a few months previously for rest and refreshment, mental and physical; and report said that he was already engaged on a new work when so suddenly stayed by the hand of death. In November Liszt had joined the Wagners there, and had spent about a fortnight with them; and a letter from him, under date November 20, 1882, from "Venezia la bella; Palazzo Vendramin," contains the following:—

Thank Heaven! the Wagners and all the family are in perfect health. . . . My illustrious friend has lodged me splendidly in a spacious apartment of the Palazzo Vendramin, which formerly belonged to Madame la Duchesse de Berry. Her son, the Duke della Grazia, is at present the owner of it, and Wagner is the tenant for one year. The

beautiful furniture still bears the impress of the old princely régime, and is perfectly preserved. The main inhabited part of the Palazzo Vendramin is in the best possible condition, so that Wagner did not have to go to any special expense, not even for stoves and other requisites, which are often neglected.

And again, on December 8:—

Here, in Palazzo Vendramin, a peaceful and most united family life goes on without monotony. But I cannot speak of the things which touch me most, except clumsily. So it is better to keep from doing so.

Again, a few weeks after the blow had fallen:—

To great grief silence is best suited. I will be silent on Wagner, the prototype of an initiatory genius.

He died at four in the afternoon of Tuesday, February 13. The *Times* of the next morning wrote as follows:—

The world is poorer by another great man. Richard Wagner died yesterday at Venice, in his seventieth year; and thus suddenly, almost without warning, and in a city which, however full of poetical associations, is entirely alien to his genius, the greatest musician of our time disappears from the scene of his struggles and his triumphs. To us of the present day, whose experience of

Wagner's music is that of a theatre filled with a rapt and enthusiastic crowd, it is difficult to recall the time when his name was one to be generally met with derision, and when, among some classes in Germany, and in England as well as France, his musical ideas were denounced as not so much revolutionary as nonsensical. One has to remember, however, how long it is since Wagner began to compose. It was in 1841 that he began "Rienzi," in Paris, and "The Flying Dutchman" followed immediately, while "Tannhäuser," which remains to this day his best known opera, was composed in 1845.

And the *Athenæum* touched upon one of the most important of his characteristics, when it said:—

Like many another great genius, Wagner was in advance of his age. . . . To Wagner we owe the emancipation of the opera from the thralldom of the prima donna. After the mighty impulse which he has given to the art, it is inconceivable that the vapid libretti which were common enough half a century ago should hold their place on the modern stage. In future the poet and musician must stand at least approximately on a footing of equality in the opera. . . . We believe that in him who is just taken from us we have lost probably the greatest musical genius since Beethoven, and we may assuredly say—

"We shall not look upon his like again."

This is not the place or opportunity to enlarge upon Wagner's life ; the ample Wagner-literature that exists provides all the details of his struggles and his fame ; but, for those who can read between the lines, what enormous significance lies in the few following dates ; what a history behind them !

- 1842. "Rienzi" produced at Dresden.
- 1843. "Der Fliegende Holländer" produced at Dresden.
- 1848. The Revolution, and Wagner's exile from Germany.
- 1850. First performance of "Lohengrin" at Weimar under Liszt.
- 1861. "Tannhäuser" hissed from the Paris stage.
- 1864. King Ludwig of Bavaria invites Wagner to Munich.
- 1865. "Tristan" produced at Munich under Bülow.
- 1868. "Meistersinger" produced at Munich under Bülow.
- 1870. First performance in England of a Wagner opera ("Der Fliegende Holländer").
- 1876. First public performance of the "Ring" at Bayreuth.
- 1882. First performance of the "Ring" in London under Seidl.
- 1882. First performance of "Tristan" and the "Meistersinger" in London under Richter.

The Bayreuth performances of "Parsifal" were resumed this summer, though the Master-mind that had directed them was no longer there, though the Master-hand was at rest for ever. Bache paid a flying visit there; and then, as irresistibly as the needle turns to the pole, so was he drawn again and yet again to the little Grand-Ducal city where Liszt was king. Next year it was *da capo* with Bayreuth and Weimar, with a visit to Munich sandwiched in between; the "Ring" being performed there. Liszt himself did the same, and it must have been on this occasion that Master and pupil together paid a little visit to Mme. Sophie Menter¹ at her lovely castle in the Tyrol. A memorial of this visit was an interesting photographic group: Sophie Menter on the Master's arm; Bache standing near; and the "fairy-like castle" (as Liszt styled it) forming the background.

Bache celebrated his Master's birthday this year (October 22) by an interesting Recital composed of his works exclusively, no further orchestral concert being given till 1885.

In connection with the visit to Bayreuth this year, a little joke against Bache may be told. His sister, who was also there, says: —

¹ Mme. Sophie Menter, the distinguished pianist; pupil of Liszt.

After calling upon Liszt, he announced his intention of coming to see me. When we were alone, Walter said to me, "You know, my dear child, I shall try to prevent him from coming." This on account of the two flights of stairs he would have to mount to reach my airy abode.

Inwardly chafing, I humbly said "Yes," as I always did to anything my brother Walter proposed. I think, if he had suggested my jumping over the moon, I should at least have expressed my readiness to make the attempt.

Well, the next morning we were at the window directly after breakfast, my friend and I, for we knew that in Bayreuth Liszt paid his calls early. We looked up the street, we looked down the street; no sign of the Master. In vain we watched—my heart misgave me that my brother had gained the day, and dissuaded Liszt from the fatigue. But did anyone ever know Liszt make a promise and not keep it?

Again to the window—"Sister Anne, Sister Anne, do you see anyone coming?" I forget whether Sister Anne was rewarded; but in due course *we* were.

After his visit, the cat was let out of the bag, and it then appeared that Walter had taken him to the wrong house, and *up two pairs of stairs*, ere he found out his mistake. His vexation at his own stupidity may be better imagined than described, the more so as Liszt did not allow that little *contretemps* to turn him from his purpose.

In October Bache wrote to Mr. Barry as follows :—

17, Eastbourne Terrace, W.,
October 19.

MY VERY DEAR BARRY,

. . . I want to give a Liszt orchestral concert very early next year, with this programme :—

1. Marsch der heiligen drei Könige ("Christus").
2. P. F. Concerto E flat.
3. Dante Symphony.
4. "Angelus" for stringed instruments.
5. Liszt-Weber Polonaise (P. F. and orchestra).
6. Rakoczy Marsch (Liszt).

Can you, as a professional matter of course, undertake my book for me? I should like the notices to be as short as possible, and with lots of thematic citations.

No. 4 I can tell you nothing of: you might just quote the theme, and say that, although Liszt wrote it for solo quartett, he allows it to be performed by the entire stringed orchestra, and kindly insisted on himself writing out a contra-bass part for this concert.

No. 6. No notice: only mention that Liszt instrumented it many years ago, and when he heard that Berlioz wanted to use the March in his "Faust" Liszt put his score aside, and would neither publish it nor have it performed; only since Berlioz's death and the popularization of his "Faust" has Liszt, at the entreaty of many friends, consented to publish his own version.

With one alteration—the expunging of the Weber-Liszt Polonaise, and in its place a second performance of the “Jeanne d’Arc” Scena—this concert took place on February 5, 1885. The chief interest of course centred in the Dante Symphony, which was given for the first time at these concerts.

On January 15, 1885, he wrote to Mr. Barry :—

I can’t go to bed without thanking you most heartily for your beautiful Dante notice. It is just the thing—not too long—but yet leads the Philistine, who drops in after his dinner, into a Dante frame of mind. Three cheers for you !

A visit to Weimar again this summer ; and this time it was the last.

In the latter part of this year it became a possibility, which developed into a probability, and afterwards into a certainty, that Liszt would at length revisit England in the following year. The primary object of his visit was to grace with his presence a performance of his own Oratorio “St. Elizabeth,” which the house of Novello was intending to reproduce in the spring of 1886. As soon as ever this visit was definitely settled, Liszt’s admirers in London set to work to see how they could best honour the Master in his approaching, and what in all human probability would be

his last, visit to our shores ; and foremost amid their schemes of welcome was the proposal to found a Liszt Scholarship as a lasting memorial of his coming among us. Naturally much of the work fell on the willing shoulders of Bache. Writing to his sister toward the end of 1885 he said :—

DEAREST CHILD,

Lest you should all think me dead to all feelings of brotherly love, I will send you one more line before going to bed. I have really the work of three men to do :

1. To prepare two concerts at Miss Emerson's for the Liszt-Stiftung : write to all the artists—make programmes—see to proofs—send out programmes—*sell tickets* (first and last time in my life)—in fact do *all the work*.

2. Send out orchestral engagements for my own concert ; then prepare and send out programme.

3. Practise my three Concertos : this is more than you can imagine ; today I have been $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours at the piano and seem to have done *nothing*. The Liszt Concerto I have not yet touched (not for four years), and can't look at it till next week.

4. Get out the prospectus of the Liszt subscription ; in this Hipkins kindly helps me. It ought to be out simultaneously with concert-programme, but an obstacle intervenes.

I have written letters since 9 p.m. and now it is 12. I must even give up riding every day, which was doing me such good. I am not in the least miserable : if I keep quiet and don't worry, I shall get through everything all right : but I had made six or seven evening engagements before I knew what a piece of work I had, and now I must make no more : have today declined three.

Shall you be at F. T.'s on January 1 ?

Ever your

W. B.

It rains letters !

Writing to Bache in November, Liszt said :—

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

Certainly your invitation takes precedence of all others. So choose the day that suits yourself, and I will appear. Without Walter Bache and his long years of self-sacrificing efforts in the propaganda of my works, my visit to London were indeed not to be thought of.

And again :—

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

It is fixed then : Thursday, April 8, *Ricevimento* at Walter Bache's house. Enclosed is the letter of the Philharmonic Society, together with the rough copy of my reply which I send off today. Please observe the postscript : " If, in the concert at which one of my Symphonic

Poems will be performed, Mr. Walter Bache would play some Pianoforte composition of mine, that would give me great pleasure. I permit myself to give this simple hint without the slightest desire of influencing your programme, which it is for you to fix."

I am quite of your opinion, dear friend. The *accented point* of my coming to London is to be present at the "Elizabeth" performance. It was this that decided my coming, and it is to be hoped it will be a success. . . .

Faithfully yours,
F. LISZT.

XI

LISZT'S LAST VISIT TO ENGLAND

1886

IN the middle of January a concert was held at the house of Miss Emerson, to help to raise funds for the projected Liszt Scholarship. This lady, at whose school Walter Bache had for some time been teaching, threw herself heart and soul into the interest of the undertaking, and generously lent her rooms for the occasion. The programme included a Beethoven Trio, played by M. de Pachmann, Herr Peiniger, and Mr. Howell; Songs of Beethoven and Dvorák, sung (and the latter also exquisitely accompanied) by Mr. Shakespeare; solos for violoncello, violin, and piano; amongst the latter may be singled out M. de Pachmann's masterly rendering of one of Liszt's Rhapsodies.

In February followed Bache's concert—the last

orchestral one that he ever gave. He set himself a most exacting programme — three pianoforte Concertos to play — Beethoven's third, Liszt's second, and Chopin's first ; with only a breathing space between the last two. Musicians will appreciate the strain of such a programme ; I do not mean to say that it has not been done before and since, but in nearly every such instance it will probably be found that the soloist was perfectly free of other work—a virtuoso alone, giving lessons but rarely or fitfully ; whereas Bache was hard at work as a professor from morning till night, and in addition was straining every nerve in preparation for a fitting reception of his Master on his expected visit.

Having decided that his own personal share in commemorating Liszt's approaching visit should take the form of a Reception to be given in his honour, Bache was desirous of obtaining the co-operation of the most distinguished musicians, virtuosi or otherwise, who might happen to be in London at that time, in a performance of his Master's "Angelus" for strings. With this view, he wrote the following circular letter:—

March.

DEAR SIR,

Dr. Franz Liszt has promised me the honour of his presence at the Grosvenor Gallery

on Thursday April 8 at 9 p.m. The following is the musical programme of the evening :

1. "Angelus," for stringed instruments.
2. Chor der Engel ("Faust"), lady students of the Royal Academy.
3. Songs.
4. Pianoforte Solo (W. Bache).

Beyond these four works of our guest, there will be no other music whatsoever.

For the performance of the "Angelus" the co-operation of twelve violins (1st and 2nd), four violas, four violoncelli and four contrabasses is desirable. The necessary rehearsal will take place at the Grosvenor Gallery, New Bond Street, at *one o'clock* on Thursday, April 8. If the artists taking part kindly give their *punctual attendance* this rehearsal need not detain them more than half an hour.

I now venture to suggest to yourself—that it will be a *very great compliment* to the composer of the "Angelus"—and one which he will not fail to appreciate—if you will take part in its performance.

My suggestion is an unusual one: but so is the cause prompting it: neither one nor the other is likely to recur. I do not ask a favour on my own behalf—but desire to ascertain whether you are able and willing to give this important help to our efforts to receive Liszt with that heartiness and cordiality which have invariably marked his treatment of others.

Assuredly, nothing could gratify him more than

the knowledge that the first artists of London had combined thus to welcome him!

I remain, dear sir,

Yours truly,

WALTER BACHE.

P.S. If my suggestion meets with your approval—and if consequently the most eminent performers at present in London should unite for a performance of the “Angelus”—it is evident that any question of precedence will be fatal to their generous intentions!

I therefore venture to suggest that the Gordian knot of 1st and 2nd violins may be at once untied if one or two of our acknowledged greatest soloists would volunteer to play 2nd violin.

Regarding the matter of precedence at the viola, 'cello and contrabass desks, there can be little fear but that those whose strong artistic feeling prompts them to come forward, will carry this characteristic one step further, to the avoidance of all possible perplexities.

It is needless to say that Dr. Liszt himself, as well as our other guests of the evening, will appreciate to the full the motive which leads the most celebrated artists to volunteer to a subordinate post.

In connection with the postscript, the reader will recall the jocular remark Bache made some years previously, about the desirability of people learning to play “second fiddle” on many occasions through

life. Few, however, are able to bring themselves to such a point of self-abnegation! It is therefore a double pleasure to be able to relate that Sarasate was a noble exception in this instance, and met the proposition in the spirit in which it had been made. Unfortunately he was at that time in Madrid, whence the following hearty response was penned to Bache:—

Madrid,
6. 4. '86.

MONSIEUR,

Je regrette de tout mon cœur de me trouver si loin au moment où vous fêtez le grand Liszt. Autrement, je me serais trouvé très honoré d'accepter n'importe quelle mission dans votre orchestre.

Hurrah for Liszt! Eljen! Toute l'Espagne artistique s'associe avec enthousiasme aux démonstrations de Paris et Londres en faveur de l'un des dieux de la Musique!

Votre,
PABLO DE SARASATE.

In spite of one or two such notable disappointments, Bache succeeded in getting a picked orchestra of most of the leading players in London.

On April 3 Liszt arrived. Then followed such a Festival-fortnight as those who took part in it will never forget. Liszt had just come straight over from another such Festival in Paris, where he

had been the guest of Munkaczy, the painter ; yet, in spite of his seventy-five years, he managed in London to go through more than most men twenty years younger could have stood. I believe he did feel it, though he bore up well, and was too courteous and considerate for others to give any sign ; but he often looked weary, and there can be little wonder when we recall that three short months after London was fête-ing him he was lying upon his death-bed. The papers chronicled his doings from day to day ; it is therefore unnecessary to repeat here all that is already so familiar ; but various details not generally known, and hitherto unpublished, will be of interest here.

The guest of the late Mr. and Mrs. Littleton of Westwood House, Sydenham, he arrived there on the evening of Saturday, April 3, when some hundreds of guests were already assembled to meet him. At his appearance in the beautiful music-room, he was greeted with a burst of applause. As this is all rather fully described in a couple of private letters written at the time by Constance Bache¹ to her sister, then abroad, extracts from them are here quoted :—

Liszt only arrived at Sydenham towards eight o'clock, and by about nine already he appeared on

¹ Apparent anomaly explained in Preface.

the balustrade that connects the music-room with the drawing-room; the music-room is built down below, like Mr. Dannreuther's. He was greeted with an outburst of applause. Of course he went to the front of the room near the piano, and later on, with ——'s help, I succeeded in getting there too. Soon afterwards Walter appeared, and then played the piece (Handel-Liszt) which Liszt dedicated to him. . . . While he played, Liszt sat on the floor of the platform listening, and looked so pleased. Liszt retired early, being very tired; and Walter went off with him, but returned later in the evening after Liszt had gone to bed. . . .

Tuesday a little quiet dinner at Walter's before the concert (*i.e.*, the performance of "St. Elizabeth," for which he had come to England). We sat down eight. When dinner was announced, Walter, smiling sweetly on us three ladies, said, "Well, I will take the Master down," and offered his arm to Liszt. Liszt smilingly put him aside, and came and gave his arm to me! Of course he was quite right, and everything he does is so gracefully and beautifully done. We had a charming couple of hours—the happiest, I think, of the whole week. . . . We all went at the appointed time to the concert—I with an enormous basket of roses,¹ really magnificent, tied with the Hungarian colours, and with my verses pinned on; these I presented to the Master when he came in. Of course I had to take them back again, as he could not hold them, but I think they were taken to him after-

¹ In allusion to the "Rose-Miracle."

wards; the joke was I had put them in Walter's greenhouse to keep cool and fresh, and Walter took Liszt in to see the greenhouse, not knowing anything about it, and the first thing Liszt saw was this.

The lines face this page. They are surmounted by an inscription in Hungarian :—

“To the Master
Franz Liszt :
A Welcome.”

Between the English and the Hungarian coats of arms are two hands clasped ; and beneath them is a leading motive from the “St. Elizabeth.” The Hungarian coat of arms and inscription were kindly supplied by the Austrian Embassy.

Well—the performance was splendid ; Albani is simply perfect as St. Elizabeth, I never heard anything more refined and beautiful than her whole rendering of it. Liszt had to go into the orchestra both after the first part and at the end of the work, and the audience literally rose at him. *Such a reception*, such cheers and clappings ; then in the middle interval the Prince of Wales went out for him, and brought him to be introduced to the Princess.

That same afternoon had been the concert and presentation of the Scholarship [over £1,000] at the Royal Academy of Music, of which I can't tell you much, because I was not permitted to be



1.

We welcome thee, from southern sunnier clime,
To England's shore, [time
And stretch glad hands across the lapse of
To thee once more.

11.

Full twice two decades swiftly have rolled by
Since thou wast here ;
A meteor flashing through our northern sky
Thou didst appear.

111.

Thy coming now we greet with pleasure keen
And loyal heart,
Adding tradition of what thou hast been
To what thou art.

1b.

No laurel can we weave into the crown
Long years entwine,
Nor add one honour unto the renown
Already thine :

1b.

Yet might these roses waft to thee a breath
Of memory,
Recalling thy fair Saint Elizabeth
Of Hungary.

11.

We welcome her, from out those days of old,
In song divine,
But thee we greet a thousand thousand fold,
The song is thine !

there. But Mr. Hartvigson told me that Liszt's playing there was more beautiful than he had ever heard him.

Thursday the 8th, a private dinner to Liszt at the Langham Hotel, not given, as was somewhere reported, by the Hungarians of London, but by an admiring friend. The manager of the Langham had taken quite a personal interest in it, and begged to be allowed to decorate the place a little ; so there was red carpet down the steps for us, just as if we were Royalty, and a crowd on each side to see him pass. . . . I had to leave the dinner-table early to join Walter at the Grosvenor Gallery, where he asked me to help him to receive. Of my personal friends at the Reception I hardly saw any after first receiving them ; they passed before me as in a kaleidoscope. . . . After the programme was over, we got Albani (the St. Elizabeth) to ask Liszt to play, which he then did. O it was *wonderful* ! More of this in my next.

Saturday the 10th, a Liszt concert at the Crystal Palace. Liszt's pupil, Stavenhagen,¹ made his début in England. Magnificent player—nice simple young fellow. He is going to be a great man, indeed he is so already, though so young and at present unknown.

April 14th, "Faust" at Lyceum, with Liszt and party in royal box. Supper at the old "Beef-steak Club" with Irving and Ellen Terry afterwards.

¹ Herr Bernard Stavenhagen ; formerly in Weimar and now settled in Munich, was one of Liszt's last and youngest pupils.

April 15th, dinner at Westwood House (sat down about twenty-six). Liszt played—at *his very best*—one of the “*Soirées de Vienne*.”



and Chopin's study in A flat major :—



and in F minor :—



and other pieces, I can't quite remember now.

¹ Mr. Hipkins writes : “I remember Liszt and Walter beginning (four hands) with the Crusaders' March from ‘St. Elizabeth.’ Then Liszt played, exquisitely, that ‘*Soirée de Vienne*’ (Schubert), the Chopin Studies, and Chopin's Nocturne, Op. 32, No. 2,



concluding with his own Fantasia on the Masaniello Tarantella.”

April 17, "St. Elizabeth" repeated at the Crystal Palace. Dinner with Liszt at the Alfred Littletons'.

April 18, drove into town with the Master, and left him at the Brompton Oratory. To lunch at Baron Orczy's in Wimpole Street. The Mass was very long that day, so Liszt with Baron Orczy joined us rather late. After lunch, a crowd in the drawing-room to hear Liszt play. He played part of his Dante Symphony and a Hungarian Rhapsody.

After Liszt had played, he and Walter and I drove off together to Mr. Boehm's studio; the latter is doing a bust of the Master, which promises to be very fine, and Liszt had promised him a sitting, so we were about an hour or so there, while Liszt sat and smoked his cigar and chatted with us; it was a most delightful hour, and you can fancy how interesting it was to watch Mr. Boehm at his work. Boehm also is a Hungarian, but has lived in England since he was quite a young fellow, and has been naturalized.

After the sitting came the long drive back to Westwood House, and then another big dinner, about twenty-six of us as before, being a return compliment to Irving and Miss Terry. That evening was, as it were, the climax of all. Liszt played again *most divinely*—not more beautifully than on the Thursday, but if anything more powerfully. He played two of the "Soirées de Vienne": the one that Bülow calls "Liebst du

mich?" because those words seem to go to the opening, questioning, phrase :



Liebst du mich ?

and this one :—



Also a Polonaise of Weber's, and his "Momento Capriccioso." Also (a little joke, in answer to an anecdote I had told him in the course of the day), one of Cramer's Studies! :—



Then a Bach Fugue (see also p. 84):—



Of this he forgot nearly half, but do you suppose he made a mistake? Not a bit of it! He simply joined on the end of the fugue to the beginning most beautifully, and this second time played it all through complete. It is delicious to watch him

when he gets into what, to other people, would be a fog—he just smiles, and you watch, wondering breathlessly how he is going to get out of it ; by some judicious turn he puts himself just where he intended to be, and you follow the rest of the course of the piece undisturbed. I forgot to say that he opened with the lovely Beethoven Variations :—



The night at the Lyceum was a *jolly one indeed*. . . . Liszt was already in the box, as his party had gone up the private staircase of the Royal Family. When the lights turned up after the first act, a March of his was played, and he was soon recognised, and had to stand up and bow to everybody. The theatre was cram full, and it was a splendid sight. During one of the intervals we were taken into the royal anteroom for some royal-tea (N.B. no pun !). Here we had also to wait after the play was over, while Irving and Miss Terry doffed their stage paint and donned their "war-paint." We sat down between twenty and thirty to supper ; Liszt between Ellen Terry and Mme. Munkaczy. E. Terry is so naïve and so fascinating that I think she would have had the best of it, only that unfortunately she does not talk anything but English, consequently Mme. Munkaczy took the wind out of

her sails. She left London last Sunday, and that was how it came to pass that Walter and I had such a happy day with the dear old man all to ourselves.

It will be seen from the above extracts that the fortnight of Liszt's stay in England was one continued succession of concerts, dinners and other *réunions*. The excitement of the musical world was at its height; it spread amongst all classes; the very cabmen talked of the "Habby Liszt"; the whole air was full of the Liszt-fever. People did many stupid things, which in their saner moments they would not have dreamed of doing; and many comic incidents occurred. Liszt received letters in which the writer, after four pages of description of him or her self, came to the real point on the fifth, in a request for a ticket to hear or to see Liszt; for such an opportunity it appeared they had spent a life-time in fruitless yearning, quite regardless of the fact that it was within their reach for a shilling. An enthusiast—they were all enthusiasts at the moment!—wrote to Walter, proposing that he and Bache should take the Albert Hall together and give a concert of Liszt's music! Bache was equal to the occasion: "I shall be most happy to join you," he wrote, "in giving a concert of Liszt's music *after he is gone*; we shall thus be able to test the sincerity of

people's enthusiasm." Need I add that he never heard another word on the subject?

Nor was *Punch* behindhand in giving his meed of honour. In April an amusing cartoon appeared, entitled "The two grand old men, who divided the honours of last week between them." The sketch represents Gladstone singing "Kathleen Mavourneen," while Liszt plays the piano accompaniment, his face beaming over with smiles. In May the following lines appeared (also in *Punch*); and there can be no need to seek far for the genial writer of them, who seems also to have been struck with the immense fatigues Liszt had gone through.

GOOD-BYE AT THE RAILWAY STATION.

VALEDICTORY BALLAD.

Music by the Abbé Liszt.

Drooping eyes and wrinkles deep,
All from want of sufficient sleep;
Drowsiness *will* begin to creep.
My boxes are ready, and, piled on high,
All wheeled out on the platform lie.
Good-bye, Walter. Good-bye, good-bye!

Hush! the train is not far away.
"Cross viâ Antwerp," it seems to say;
"Sleep all tomorrow, not wake, as today."
Ah, there it comes! I wonder why
My head should ache and my throat be dry?
Good-bye, Bache. Good-bye, good-bye!

What are we waiting for ? Can't you see
I'm as tired as ever I can be ?
Shake hands ? Again ? O deary me !
I cannot wait any longer, I.
Return some day ? Perhaps. I'll try.
Good-bye, Novello. Good-bye, good-bye !

(Falls asleep as train moves off.)

People asked for tickets for the reception at the Grosvenor Gallery in the most brazen-faced manner, as though it were a public concert, instead of a private invitation-party of Walter Bache's, for which, his own rooms being inadequate, he had engaged these; many subterfuges were resorted to in order to obtain tickets, and, *faute de mieux*, they even came without an invitation. In spite of these slight drawbacks, everything went off as well as possible, and the Reception at the Grosvenor was quite a representative gathering, including amongst its numbers the following :—

In the domain of Music :—Sir George Grove, Sir Charles Hallé, Sir George Macfarren, Sir A. C. Mackenzie, Sir Hubert Parry, Sir Arthur Sullivan; Messrs. Beringer, Dannreuther, Frits Hartvigson, Joachim, Lamond, Henry Leslie, August Manns, Vladimir de Pachmann, Carl Rosa; Professor Stanford and Dr. Steggall; Messrs. Cummings, Edward Lloyd and Sedley

Taylor; Mesdames Albani, Fanny Davies, Antoinette Sterling, Anna Williams and Agnes Zimmermann.

In Art:—Lord Leighton, Sir John Millais,¹ Sir L. Alma Tadema, Messrs. Charles Keene, Rudolf Lehmann, Stacey Marks, Felix Moscheles, Linley Sambourne, and Miss Osborn.

In Literature:—Messrs. Karl Blind, Robert Browning, F. C. Burnand, Comyns Carr and Alfred Forman.

Medicine was represented by Sir James Paget and Sir Felix Sémon. The Church by the Rev. Henry White, Chaplain of the Chapel Royal Savoy, and Chaplain to the Queen, and by the venerable Dr. Martineau. In addition to the above, there were also present the Austrian Ambassador, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Lord and Lady Walter Scott, Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, Sir Coutts Lindsay. As there were some 400 guests, it will be seen that the above is a mere outline of some of the most notable people present.

The programme, faced with a beautiful portrait of Liszt, was formed exclusively of his works, as follows:—

“Angelus” for stringed instruments.

¹ Accepted; but, I believe, not present.

“Chor der Engel” from Goethe’s “Faust.” This was sung by students of the Royal Academy of Music, Bache’s friend Mr. Shakespeare¹ conducting.

“Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude” for pianoforte, played by Bache.

Three Songs from Schiller’s “Tell,” sung by Mr. Winch.

At the conclusion of this short programme came *the* event of the evening, that for which everyone had been silently hoping and waiting.² Looking back from this distance of time, and with the after-knowledge not then possessed, that the Master was so near his end, there is a touch of deep pathos in the recollections of that evening; whilst, to those to whom Master and pupil were alike dear, many mingled emotions crowd the mind in recalling the one and only occasion on which the close tie that bound them to each other was visible to the outside world—a tie which lasted to the end of life, and which Death himself did not loosen for long.

Just before coming to England Liszt had written as follows to Bache :—

¹ Mr. William Shakespeare ; tenor singer and Professor ; in the latter capacity especially eminent.

² Liszt’s playing. See p. 291.

Budapest,

February 11, 1886.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

They seem determined in London to push me to the piano. I cannot consent to this in public, as my seventy-five-year-old fingers are no longer suited to it; and Bülow, Saint-Saëns, Rubinstein, and you, dear Bache, play my compositions much better than my humble self.

Perhaps it would be opportune if friend Hueffer would have the kindness to let the public know, by a short announcement, that Liszt only ventures to appear as a grateful visitor, and neither in London nor anywhere else as a man with an interest in his fingers.

In all friendship yours,

F. LISZT.

XII

BAYREUTH, LONDON, THE END

1886

LISZT left England on April 20, and on the 23rd Bache wrote as follows to his friend Mr. Hipkins :—

DEAREST HIP,

I don't think I can be surprised ever again at any kindness that arrives from No. 33.¹ So I can only thank you very much for the piano which was sent for me to Westwood House. Before leaving, Liszt spoke in detail of the Broadwood which he played upon on Thursday evening at Westwood House: he said he liked playing on it because it lent itself so well to different shades and nuances, on which he professes to be now entirely dependent for producing musical effect, for he says he has no longer any fingers for difficulties.

¹ 33, Great Pulteney Street (Broadwoods' firm).

Writing in May from Weimar to a friend, Liszt said:—

I shall not pass this summer much quieter than the winter and the spring. Next week I shall be at the Musical Festival at Sondershausen; then here again until June 30. My grand-daughter, Daniela von Bülow, is to be married on July 3, at Bayreuth, to the highly esteemed art-historian Thode. After that, I shall stay from July 5 to 18 with my dear excellent friends the Munkaczys, at their castle of Colpach (Luxemburg). I shall be present at the entire cycle of the “Parsifal” and “Tristan” performances at Bayreuth, from July 20 till August 23.

I am already more than half blind; perhaps I shall not have to wait long for the rest. . . .

All the Liszt letters hitherto quoted are from the two volumes published in 1894. The following one, which has never yet been printed, having been found only recently, will be read with interest here:—

TO WALTER BACHE.

Weimar,

12 *Juni*, 1886.

GEEHRTER, LIEBER FREUND,

Madame —— verlangt ziemlich viel. Mein Augenübel behindert mich am Schreiben, und ob ich nach Besserung desselben gestimmt sein werde, Romancen zu componiren—erscheint

mir zweifelhaft. Theilen Sie ihr meine Bangigkeit mit. . . .

Die englischen Biscuits von der *ganz rechten Sorte* finden nach meinem Beispiele allgemeinsten Beifall in der pianistischen Colonie Weimars.

Hoffentlich treffen wir uns wieder bei den ersten Vorstellungen (23 Juli) in Bayreuth.

Ob es mir die widerwärtige, aber verordnete Badekur erlaubt, länger als etwa bis 6 August in Bayreuth zu verbleiben—ist unbestimmt,

Herzlich ergebenst,

F. LISZT.

N.B. An Buonamici besten Gruss und freundschaftliches Gedenken.

Translation.

Weimar,

June 12, 1886.

HONOURED AND DEAR FRIEND,

Madame — asks a good deal. The weakness of my eyes prevents me from writing; and whether, when they are better, I shall feel in the mood for composing Romances, appears to me doubtful. Express my uncertainty to her.

The English biscuits of the *right sort* are, thanks to my example, universally approved in the pianist-colony of Weimar.

I hope we shall meet again at the first performances (July 23) in Bayreuth.

Whether the unwelcome water-cure which has been prescribed for me will allow of my remaining

in Bayreuth longer than about August 6, is not decided.

Yours, from my heart,
F. LISZT.

N.B. Best greetings and friendly remembrances to Buonamici.

This letter was dictated to one of his secretaries, and only the words "herzlich ergebenst," and the signature, in a trembling and shaky handwriting, were added by Liszt. This was, in all probability, one of the very last letters he wrote. The reference to Signor Buonamici was occasioned by a visit to England of that genial virtuoso, who was staying in the same house with Bache at this time.

In spite of the tempting suggestion that they should meet in Bayreuth, Bache was obliged to resist it. The expenses of entertaining Royalty are often so severe a tax as to lay an embargo on the honour of so doing; and the same may be said in the case of the King of musicians. Not that Liszt himself would have had it so: no man ever lived who was more simple in his own personal wants, or who was more strictly scrupulous in his anxiety not to entail expense on others: it is only necessary to read his letters to see how considerate and punctilious he was in this respect; but it was London's honour to honour him, and

it was but natural that Bache should be foremost in this desire. But doubtless it was this that kept him in England this summer; or rather, that would have done, had events been otherwise.

On July 1 Liszt betook himself to Bayreuth for the above-mentioned wedding; immediately after that came another wearying journey back to Colpach in the Luxemburg; on the 20th back again to Bayreuth, where it was his intention to stay till August 7. But, at his great age, even his iron constitution was not proof against the effects of a chill; and after a few days of what at first seemed but a slight indisposition his state became serious, and on July 31 he passed peacefully away.

This was on Saturday night: with unseemly haste the funeral was fixed for the following Tuesday. So suddenly was all arranged, that there was not even time for some of his nearest and dearest to be present to pay their last tribute to his mortal remains. Bache was summoned without an instant's delay, by a telegram from his sisters, who were there. Mr. Klindworth received a similar summons; and by starting immediately they—together with Mr. Alfred Littleton, who was commissioned to lay a wreath from the Queen of England on Liszt's grave—arrived in bare time to join the cortège just starting from

Wahnfried. They had not even time to change their travelling gear, but, tired and dusty as they were, had perforce to go direct from the railway station to the house of mourning. Bache's own letters will best tell the rest.

TO MME. HILLEBRAND.

Hillside, Kingsbury,
August 25, 1886.

In reply to your letter, received this morning, I can't exactly carry out your wishes, because I saw so little of what took place at Bayreuth : what I saw, I will tell you, and I will send you a letter of Buonamici, and a letter and two papers from Mme. Tardieu.

I left London on August 1, immediately after receiving Constance's telegram, and got to Bayreuth as soon as possible : viz., 9.45 on Tuesday morning : there my sister Margaret met me at the railway, and told me to leave luggage, and go at once to Wahnfried, as the funeral had just been fixed for ten o'clock. I got there just in time to see the coffin carried out of the house : the cemetery is quite at the other end of the town : the procession was all that could be desired : shops were shut ; black flags were waving, and the street lanterns were lighted and draped with crape : at the grave itself I could not get near enough to hear the speeches. This is all the *good* I can tell you.

At 12.30, being faint for want of food, I went with Klindworth to an hotel : there we came into a room with a lot of singers, etc., and the jokes, shouting and drinking were so shocking that I left the place after eating what was necessary : I sat on a bench outside the hotel : then Richter sent for me to come in, and then he made his speech : with this one exception there was nothing to tell us that we had suffered any loss ; the indifference of the musical world was fearful.

Until Monday, August 2, it was not even decided that the funeral should be at Bayreuth : and then it was fixed for Tuesday morning early. None of Liszt's *old* pupils were there ! no Bülow, Prückner,¹ Rubinstein ; only Klindworth, to whom Constance had telegraphed. This is all I can tell you, and it is sad to tell. All the *young* pupils except D'Albert were there ; and he never had the news till too late to come. Siloti, Friedheim, Stavenhagen, Reisenauer, Weingartner were present. . . .

Now good-bye, my dear friend, to whom I owe the greatest privilege of my life—the honour and happiness of having known the great Hero, for this he was. Indeed it is no sentimental exaggeration to say that his life was one of self-sacrifice and self-renunciation : if you consider what he was as a composer, what he knew himself to be, and how even his “friends” treated him, you

¹ Dionys Pruckner, 1834-1896 ; distinguished pianist and Professor at the Stuttgart Conservatorium ; one of the earlier pupils of Liszt.

will agree with me. Callander was at the funeral ; also Alfred Littleton, who travelled with me.

Ever your affectionate

W. B.

Another letter to the same friend, about the same time, contains the following :—

Of what we all have so much at heart just now, I scarcely feel inclined to speak : it is too hard to realize : but it was certainly better *now* : if his life had been spared, it seems certain that he would have had to support the affliction of blindness, partial or total ; and the attack of dropsy which he suffered this summer would surely have led to other complications. What has been our loss has been his gain : *his courage was marvellous* : of this last, Buonamici wrote me a most touching account. The calmness with which he looked forward to blindness, or death, or whatever might happen, was really majestic.

I have been so thankful to get back here to quiet and solitude, which I much desired. The happiness I have had since my return, from his music, is greater than I can tell you of. I am just studying a really representative work of his, “Après une lecture de Dante” : you doubtless know it well : I knew it somewhat, but have never studied it till now : it is a piece which must be known well to be understood.

Well—I suppose we both of us begin to look forward to the time when we shall also take the

long journey! I hope we may yet have many happy days here: for myself I don't feel at all broken-hearted; but still I do look forward with some degree of pleasure to the change.

To his sister he wrote on August 15:—

Hillside, Kingsbury Green, N.W.

. . . Regarding myself—I do want to tell you how very happy I have been since I have broken the ice and begun to work without interruption: naturally I have principally inclined towards the works of him whom we have lost; it has made me so happy to feel, as I do, that all he could give us is *here*. He died without much suffering: had he lived another ten years he could have given us nothing more; and he might himself have deteriorated. Therefore I begin to feel that it was better now than had it been deferred to the chances of the future.

His work is all with us: and our work—to make his known—is clear, and will be easier as personal feelings regarding him, whether friendly or the reverse, die out. I am glad I came straight home, as I could never have got into this frame of mind without two essentials—a piano and comparative solitude. . . . I only give you this egotistical description because I hope that something of the same ideas may have been present to Connie and yourself now that you are quiet and alone. . . .

No *news* can be expected from Kingsbury: it

is quite out of the world (thank goodness). I began "Felix Holt" to-day: the *wit* of the early chapters (on questions of religion and politics) is marvellous: one must read it attentively in order not to lose anything.

My poor horse went down yesterday and cut its knees: I don't think it is my fault: I think he (Professor Dumpling is his name) is getting old: he may be good in harness for some years, but I don't think he can be trusted much for hacking.

You will think I am getting old and silly when I tell you I have ventured on to what the Germans call the *Eselsweise*.¹ This morning was fine and warm, and I had the day before me: the newspaper contained a case of householder versus barrel-organ: the magistrate, according to my view, didn't know his work. So I have written a philippic which will make him tremble in his tomb: if they put it in, I will send it to you. But these are holiday stupidities: don't think I shall commit them when work begins again.

As will be seen from these letters, Bache met his greatest bereavement with manly fortitude, and did not intend to let himself be unduly cast down by it. All the same, I have always thought that Liszt's death was Bache's death-blow, strive against it as bravely as he might: the great joy of life was over for him, although he felt strongly

¹ Mania for writing letters to the newspapers.

the duty that devolved on him of making his Master's music more than ever known. This autumn his customary Recital was omitted ; but the Crystal Palace concert of Saturday October 23 was especially arranged in commemoration of Liszt's birthday (which was the 22nd), by a programme opening with the Funeral March from "Götterdämmerung," and including the *Vorspiel* to "Parsifal," every other item being from the works of Liszt. Bache was the pianist on this occasion, playing Liszt's A major Concerto, and the bold and piquant "Fantasia on Hungarian Melodies," also with orchestra.

On February 21, 1887, Bache gave a Recital, including in it for the first time Liszt's "Fantasia quasi Sonata, après une lecture de Dante," mentioned a few pages back. Also the two-pianoforte arrangement of Liszt's "Mazeppa," played on this occasion by Mr. Frits Hartvigson and the concert-giver.

The last Recital Bache ever gave was on October 22 of this same year, when, in commemoration of his Master's birthday, the programme consisted entirely of Liszt's works. It included one piece never before given at these concerts, namely the "Sposalizio," written in musical illustration of Raphael's exquisite picture of that title. The programme contained an

engraving of the immortal work which hangs in the Brera Gallery at Milan.

On October 31 Sir George Macfarren¹ died, at the ripe age of seventy-four, having been born the same year as Wagner. His loss was a genuine sorrow to Bache, who had worked alongside of him for some years at the Royal Academy, of which Sir George had been President about twelve years at the time of his death. Like the late Professor Fawcett, M.P., he was an example of the triumph of mind over matter. Both men, afflicted with blindness, nevertheless attained to the highest honours in their respective professions, and thus afford a cheering stimulus to the many who, through some accident or contretemps of Nature, may feel tempted to throw up the sponge in despair.

Writing to Mr. Barry the day after this sad event had taken place, Bache said :—

About our dear old Mac: it is a very great loss, and to me personally something of a grief: I respected him very much, and also liked him. He filled *a very difficult position* very well.

In January 1888, Bache, himself a member of the English Goethe Society, undertook the getting

¹ Sir George Alexander Macfarren, 1813-1887; Professor and composer; late Principal of the Royal Academy of Music.

up of a performance of Liszt's music to Goethe's "Faust." This work, of which he had already given two orchestral performances, was on this occasion played by himself and Mr. Henschel¹ on two pianos. Mr. Shakespeare took the tenor solo, and there was a chorus of male voices. Apart from the ostensible reasons for the choice of this work, than which nothing could have been more suitable for the occasion, Bache had an ulterior motive, namely, the hope of interesting Mr. Henschel in the work sufficiently to induce him to include it in one of the series of orchestral concerts which he for many years conducted in London. This hope, which Bache had very near at heart, has unhappily never been realized. It is enough to look back to the "orchestral letters" of Edward Bache, written some five-and-thirty years previously, to see that we march slowly in these matters here, and to see also that "orchestral concert" spells "ruin" to the private entrepreneur, and "subservience" to him who is backed by a committee.

Apropos of this performance, which took place at Queen's Gate Hall, Kensington, Bache wrote as

¹ Mr. Georg Henschel; baritone singer, pianist, conductor, composer; founded the "London Symphony Concerts"; for three years conductor of the Boston (U.S.A.) Symphony Orchestra; has attained eminence in all these branches.

follows to Mme. Hillebrand just after the "Wagner-Liszt Correspondence" had been published:—

17, Eastbourne Terrace,
Hyde Park, W.,
January 25, 1888.

I am sure that our thoughts have been in the same groove during the last weeks: what a *sublime* book—this "Wagner-Liszt Correspondence"! And is there *one* of us (even your dear self) who does not feel guilty of having sometimes judged the great Departed unjustly, even impertinently, according to our small views, and not in harmony with his much greater ones? I allude to many small matters which we put down to weakness, old age, etc., which now appear to me as parts of his enormous and unflinching plan of *self-abnegation*, in which he had reached a height that is almost incomprehensible to us. If you think I exaggerate, tell me when next we meet: I long to talk with you about it.

I sent you a little programme last week, merely because the small affair gave me great pleasure: we had an audience of about 250, which followed with *real* interest, and even enthusiasm. They are now anxious for another performance with orchestra. *I cannot give it*, but hope to make Henschel do it next year, in which case I may do something to prevent his having bad financial results.

This concert was Bache's last public appearance. In February he had the happiness of welcoming

his old friend Dr. (now Sir Alexander) Mackenzie¹ to the post of Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, where the mutual hope was expressed of working many years side by side.

On March 6 Mr. A. J. Hipkins, one of the greatest living authorities on the old instruments, gave to the students of the Royal Academy of Music a Recital on the Clavichord, Spinet, Harpsichord, and the Grand Pianoforte of the present day. This drew from Bache the following enthusiastic and characteristic letter :—

17, Eastbourne Terrace,
Hyde Park, W.,
March 7.

DEAREST HIP,

Indeed I owe you a very great pleasure, and feel very grateful for it. I was most strangely and delightfully impressed and surprised by the Bach Prelude. I thought myself for the moment in fairyland! With the Fantasia Cromatica my feeling was rather one of surprise that Bach could have conceived such impassioned music for such an inadequate instrument; but how well you played it! I really didn't know you were such a swell! The Spinet division² made me prouder of my countrymen (including A. J. H.) than I have been for a long time: the instrument was pleasant, and

¹ Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie; violinist, Professor, composer, conductor; present Principal of the Royal Academy of Music.

² This consisted of the compositions of old English writers.

the music ditto: you must let me know, when we meet, whether these three pieces are published.

The tone of the Harpsichord, especially with that octave stop, was less sympathetic to me, although it was more powerful. After the first Couperin piece I had to leave, and had a great pleasure in a not very finished performance of the "Tasso."¹ I do wish you had heard it! It made a decided success in a rather empty room. It is a *grand work*: if you look at it through a microscope you can see stitches and patches perhaps; I am fully alive to all that; but Professor Brahms, with all his great gifts and masterly workmanship, will never produce such a work if he lives a hundred years. It made me blubber like blazes, and sent me home happy.

More about your Recital when we meet: I have not had such a musical evening as last night for very long: I am sure all the R.A. students appreciated your kindness. *I wish you could repeat it.*

Apart from personal friendship, I am sure we have the right man in Mackenzie,² and I am very happy about it.

In less than three weeks from the date of this letter, Bache had passed away. A chill and an

¹ At one of the "Symphony Concerts."

² This occasion was the first appearance of Sir A. C. Mackenzie as Principal of the R.A.M.; hence the above remark.

ulcerated throat, such as a robust man would have easily shaken off, proved too much for his overworked and highly-strung nature; on March 23 he was teaching, as usual, at the Academy; on the 24th followed private lessons at home; on the 26th he was gone.

Humble to a fault as to what he had been able to achieve, fully alive to the insufficiency of his own mortal powers adequately to express all that he felt in his soul, the following lines embody what I believe he must have sometimes thought, as exemplified in his own concerts, where he always endeavoured to choose the best exponent of any great work of his adored master, quite regardless of whether that exponent happened to be himself, or another :—

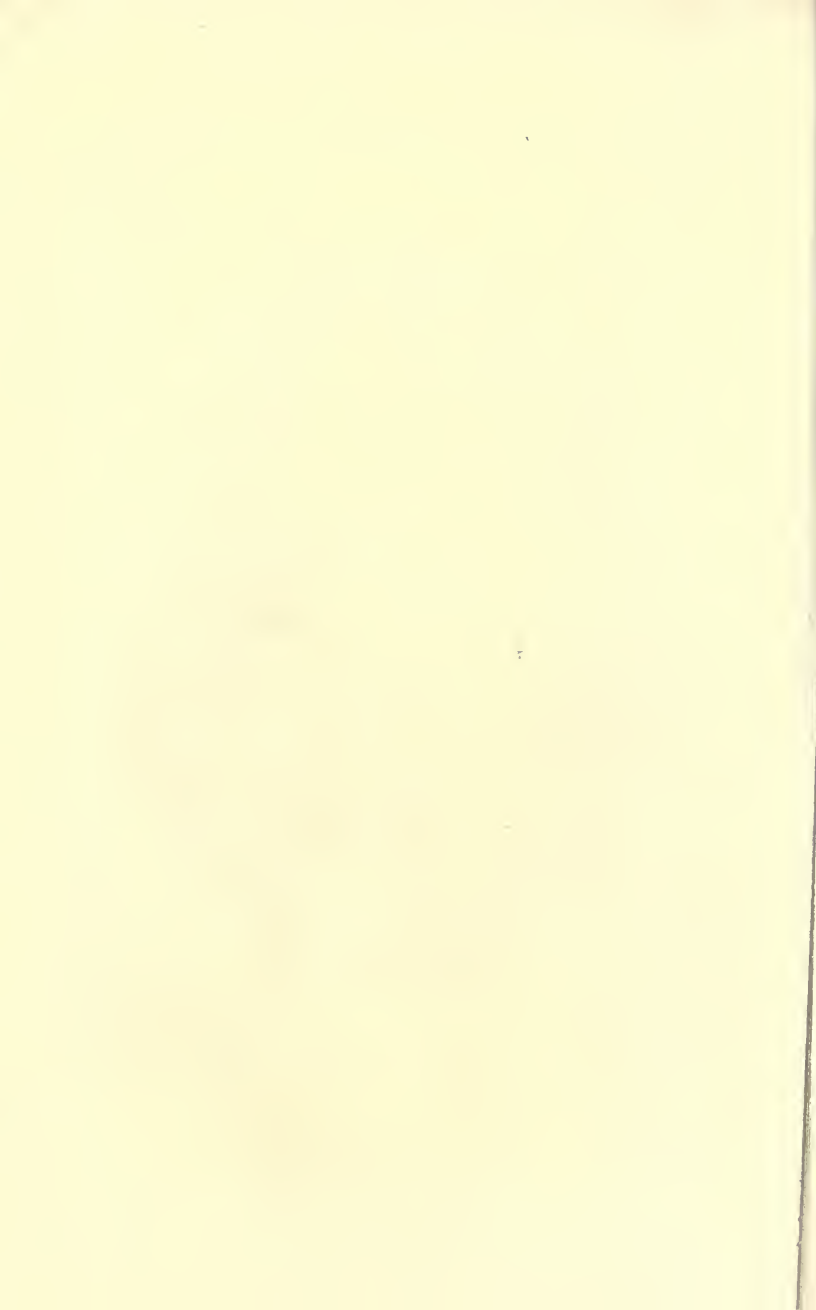
Dwells within the soul of every artist
More than all his effort can express ;
And he knows the best remains unuttered ;
Sighing at what *we* call his success.

Vainly he may strive ; he dare not tell us
All the sacred mysteries of the skies :
Vainly he may strive ; the deepest beauty
Cannot be unveiled to mortal eyes.

And the more devoutly that he listens,
And the holier message that is sent,
Still the more his soul must struggle vainly,
Bowed beneath a noble discontent.



Walter Bache.



No musician ever held your spirit
Charmed and bound in his melodious chains,
But be sure he heard, and strove to render,
Feeble echoes of celestial strains.¹

That his unselfish devotion to the cause to which his life had been dedicated was fully and generously acknowledged by his fellow-musicians and other friends, is beautifully shown, firstly, in the words of the Principal of the Royal Academy, in his address to the students early in the May following Bache's death. Of this speech, the last two sentences are quoted here :—

Unselfishness, honesty, truthfulness, tender-heartedness, generosity even to rashness : these are some of the virtues which we were accustomed to attribute to the knights of old, and they were his. In him there was something more than a mere touch of the true knight "without fear and without reproach" ; and a fine and sensitive artist, as well as a most noble man, was lost to us when Walter Bache passed unexpectedly away from our midst.

Secondly, in the founding of a Scholarship in Bache's name and memory, which, in deference to, and ready appreciation of, what he himself would best have liked, was made subsidiary to the Liszt Scholarship founded two years previously. A sum

¹ "Unexpressed," by Adelaide Anne Procter.

of rather more than £500 was speedily collected, and added to the parent fund, which henceforth bears the title :—

“THE LISZT-BACHE SCHOLARSHIP.”¹

* * * * *

Heaven-born genius is a gift from God ; and next to that, assuredly, we may place the genius of hard—still more, of unremitting—work.

To other executants, especially to the younger ones, who perhaps have not as yet formed any definite plan of work, it may be of interest to know how strictly Bache kept his “debtor and creditor” account of his own practising. At the end of his last diary is made out an exact calculation of what he had done in the aggregate from the years 1875 to 1887, with 1888 already sketched in, with the space left to be filled afterwards. It was his habit to jot down in the margin of the diary how much practice he had done each day, and the last entry is *two hours on March 24*, two days only before his death.

Amongst very many truly appreciative notices of his life and death, it is enough to quote here a

¹ It is gratifying to note that the first student to obtain this scholarship was a pupil of Walter Bache's at the R.A.M., Miss Grace Henshaw (now Mrs. Frederiksen).

couple of sentences which, like an instantaneous photograph, present to us a picture perfect in its truthfulness :—

Walter Bache's devotion to Liszt was one of the most beautiful and the most sentimental things of a musically material age.

We can only wish that among his survivors there were a few more like him in his devotion, his uprightness, and unselfishness.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF ALL THE
ORCHESTRAL WORKS OF LISZT GIVEN AT
WALTER BACHE'S CONCERTS.

First Orchestral Concert, May 26, 1871 :

Les Préludes.

First Concerto.

Conductors : Mr. Dannreuther and Bache.

Second Orchestral Concert, March 21, 1872 :

Festklänge.

Les Préludes.

Weber-Liszt Polonaise.

Conductors : Mr. Manns and Bache.

Third Orchestral Concert, February 28, 1873 :

Thirteenth Psalm.

Chorus of Reapers (from "Prometheus").

Conductors : Mr. Manns and Bache.

Fourth Orchestral Concert, November 27, 1873 :

Tasso.

Orpheus.

Schubert-Liszt Fantasia.

Weber-Liszt Polonaise.

March : "Vom Fels zum Meer."

Conductor : Dr. Hans von Bülow.

Fifth Orchestral Concert, February 25, 1875 :

Festklänge.
Second Concerto.
Weber-Liszt Polonaise.
Chorus of Reapers (from "Prometheus").
Soldatenlied (from "Faust").
Thirteenth Psalm.

Conductor : Dr. Hans von Bülow.

Sixth Orchestral Concert, February 24, 1876 :

The Legend of St. Elizabeth.

Conductor : Bache.

Seventh Orchestral Concert, February 27, 1877 :

Mazeppa.
Les Préludes.
Second Concerto.
Loreley.

Conductor : Mr. Manns.

Eighth Orchestral Concert, February 19, 1878 :

Orpheus.
Fantasie über Ungarische Volksmelodien.
Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher.

Conductor : Mr. Manns.

Ninth Orchestral Concert, February 25, 1879 :

Mazeppa.
Rhapsodie Hongroise (No. 4).

Conductor : Mr. Manns.

Tenth Orchestral Concert, March 11, 1880 :

A Faust Symphony (first performance in England).

Conductors : Mr. Manns and Bache.

Eleventh Orchestral Concert, March 2, 1882 :

A Faust Symphony.

Fest Marsch (zur Goethe Feier).

Mephisto-Walzer.

Conductor : Bache.

Twelfth Orchestral Concert, February 5, 1885 :

Dante.

First Concerto.

Angelus.

Rákóczy March.

Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher.

March : "Die heiligen drei Könige."

Conductors : Mr. Dannreuther and Bache.

Thirteenth Orchestral Concert, February 8, 1886 :

Second Concerto.

Conductor : Mr. Dannreuther.

INDEX

- ADDISON, 14, 15, 73, 74
 Aikin, 72, 74
 Albani, Mme., 290, 291, 299
 Albertini, 92, 93, 96
 Alboni, 131
 Allen, 253, 254
 Ames, Mrs., 40, 128
 André, 95
 Arditi, 201
 Arnold, 128
 Asantschewsky, M. von, 143,
 151, 173, 180, 181, 192, 193
 Ashdown, 126-128
 Atry, 155
 Auber, 55
 Augener, 51, 104, 126-128

 Bach, 20, 84, 141, 165, 169, 197,
 199, 214, 215, 222, 237, 294,
 316
 Bache, Rev. S., 7, 88, 128, 182
 Baker, 228
 Balakireff, 271
 Balfe, 27
 Barham, Foster, 7, 10, 23, 41, 79,
 96, 127
 Barnett, John, 140
 Barnett, the Misses, 140-142
 Barnett, Domenico, 144
 Barry, 84, 85, 260, 278, 279, 313
 Barth, 76
 Beethoven, 3, 16, 22, 24, 26, 28,
 30, 32-34, 81-83, 88, 96, 132,
 134, 141, 173, 177, 188, 195,
 199, 214, 215, 227, 237, 251,
 257, 263, 274, 283, 284, 295
 Bell, 61
 Bell, Miss, 127
 Belletti, 131
 Bellini, 12, 25, 47, 96, 133
 Belper, Lord, 28
 Bennett, Sir W. S., 4, 6, 16, 19,
 21, 22, 27, 55, 73, 126, 137
 Bennett, J. R. Sterndale, 19
 Benson, Archbishop, 228
 Berger, 21-23, 27, 28, 34, 43, 50,
 51, 54, 75, 126
 Berlioz, 23, 26, 36, 82, 203, 222,
 278
 Beringer, 298
 Berry, Mme. la Duchesse de,
 272
 Bertini, 231
 Betz, 252
 Black, 100
 Blind, Carl, 299
 Blum, 237
 Blumenthal, 150, 227
 Blyth, 29
 Boehm, Sir J. E., 293
 Borghi-Mamo, 52
 Borodin, 26, 270
 Bosio, 52
 Bote and Bock, 163
 Bottesini, 227
 Bowring, 7
 Brahms, Dr., 239, 317
 Brandt, 270
 Brazil, Emperor of, 247
 Breadalbane, Marquis of, 173
 Brendel, 26
 Broadwood, 51, 77, 100, 214, 302
 Browning, Robert, 299
 Bülow, H. von, 26, 55, 104, 131,

- 148, 156, 163, 164, 195, 199,
 203, 205, 206, 209-211, 214-218,
 225, 226, 230, 237, 239, 240,
 256, 257, 259-262, 267, 268,
 271, 275, 294, 301, 308, 322,
 323
 Bülow, Daniela von, 303
 Buonamici, 148, 225, 231, 234,
 247, 267, 268, 304, 305, 307,
 309
 Burdett-Coutts, the Baroness,
 299
 Burnand, F. C., 299
 Burns, 104
 Buti, Signora, 127
 Byron, Lady, 7

 Callander, 167, 187, 202, 208,
 309
 Campbell, Dr., 261
 Campbell and Ransford, 14
 Carr, Comyns, 299
 Carrodus, 8
 Chance, 103
 Chase, 127
 Cherubini, 148
 Chopin, 26, 75, 76, 80, 101, 133,
 141, 162, 166, 173, 197, 199,
 226, 230, 237, 255, 263, 271,
 284, 292
 Chorley, 39, 40
 Christina, Queen, 96
 Clementi, 196
 Cramer, 260, 294
 Coates, 127
 Cobb, 7
 Coleridge, Lord Chief Justice,
 299
 Collard, 195
 Cornelius, 31, 257-259
 Cornelius, Frau Professor, 247
 Costa, 46, 92
 Costaggini, 127
 Couperin, 317
 Cummings, Dr., 299
 Cushman, 93, 157
 Cusins, Sir W. G., 188
 Czartoryska, Princess, 173
 Czerny, 88-90, 104, 132, 173,
 260

 D'Albert, 308
 Damrosch, Dr., 255
 Dannreuther, 187, 189, 197-200,
 204, 205, 209, 239, 289, 298,
 322, 324
 Dante, 309, 312
 Daubert, 208
 David, 132, 135, 136, 163
 Davies, Miss Fanny, 64, 299
 Davison, 185, 238
 Deichmann, 54, 55, 57, 64, 65,
 75, 131, 208
 Dendy, 68
 Dickens, 20, 22
 Dolby, 55, 99, 128
 Donizetti, 12, 25, 34, 35, 42, 96,
 193
 Doppler, 261
 Downshire, Marchioness of, 126
 Dräseke, 237
 Dumas, 257
 Dupont, 136
 Dvorák, 283

 Edwards, 200
 Ehlert, 175, 181
 Emerson, Miss, 280, 283
 England, Queen of, 306
 Evans, Dr. Sebastian, 103
 Evans, 128

 Fawcett, Professor, 313
 Field, 76
 Flavell, 64, 126, 137, 138
 Fletcher, 128
 Flower, 7
 Fontanier, D. de, 195
 Forman, Alfred, 299
 Formes, 11
 Franchomme, 173
 Frege, 55, 104, 127
 Friederici, 55
 Friedheim, 308
 Frood, 190
 Furino, 172

 Gade, 199
 Garcia, Gustave, 148, 186, 187,
 189, 195
 Garcia, Viardot-, 133, 136, 212

- Gaskell, Mrs., 93
 Gassier, 52
 Germany, Emperor of, 247
 Gibson, 157
 Gladstone, Right Hon. W. E., 297
 Goddard, Mme. A., 10, 26, 127, 128, 187
 Goddard, Rev., 156
 Goethe, 49, 129, 196, 264, 300, 313, 314, 324
 Grazia, Duke della, 272
 Grevel and Co., 242
 Grisi, 11, 12, 142
 Grove, Sir George, 141, 298
 Gudehus, 270
 Gully, Right Hon. W. C., 7
 Gura, 252
 Gurckhaus, 55

 Hahn, 266
 Halévy, 12
 Hallé, Sir Charles, 26, 55, 209, 298
 Handel, 33-35, 50, 138, 289
 Harrison, 128
 Hartvigson, 195, 197, 199, 200, 204, 209, 211, 212, 247, 290, 298, 312
 Hatzfeld, 127, 128
 Hauptmann, 21, 22, 24, 32, 33, 35, 39-41, 45, 50, 51, 132, 134
 Hauptmann, Mrs., 135
 Hausmann, 14, 185
 Haydn, 33
 Hayes, 8
 Heap, Dr., 222
 Heller, 80
 Henshaw, 320
 Henschel, 314, 315
 Henselt, A. von, 199, 212, 214
 Herz, 53
 Hill, H. Weist, 128
 Hill, Karl, 252, 268, 270
 Hillebrand, Dr. Karl, 267, 268
 Hillebrand, Mme. (see Laussot)
 Hiller, Ferdinand von, 84
 Hipkins, 51, 100, 101, 154, 173, 185, 198, 200, 235, 280, 292, 302, 316

 Honey, 92
 Hopwood and Crew, 126
 Hoskier, Mdle., 127
 Hosmer, Miss, 157
 Howell, 283
 Hueffer, Dr., 243, 301
 Humberti, 267
 Hummel, 77, 88
 Husson, Mme., 128

 Ingram, 33, 36, 45, 51, 56, 73, 75, 83, 91, 93, 126-128, 180
 Irving, Sir Henry, 291, 293, 295

 Jackson, 127
 Jaell, 137
 Jäger, 270
 Joachim, Dr., 132, 134, 139, 170, 187, 212, 256, 298
 Jullien, 30, 133

 Kaulbach, 31
 Keene, 299
 Kelly, 126
 Kindermann, 268
 Kistner, 37, 51, 54, 55, 71, 75, 76, 88, 89, 95, 97, 98, 101, 128, 131, 135, 146
 Kistner, Mdle. Elizabeth, 127
 Klindworth, 197-200, 204, 212, 229, 240, 247, 255, 256, 263, 306, 308
 Kuhe, 127
 Kümpel, 198-200

 Lablache, 12, 92
 Lamond, 298
 Lanner, 36
 Lassen, 203
 Lasserre, 260
 Laussot, Mme., 148-152, 158, 159, 161, 164-168, 170, 172, 174-178, 181, 183, 186, 187, 189, 192, 201, 208, 214, 238, 243, 254, 256, 259, 266, 307, 314, 315
 Lehmann, Fräulein, 131
 Lehmann, Rudolf, 299
 Leighton, Lord, 150, 299
 Lenau, 196

- Leonard and Co., 128
 Leslie, 298
 Levi, 268
 Lind-Goldschmidt, 98
 Lindsay, Sir Coutts, 299
 Lippi, 267
 Liszt, Eduard, 202
 Liszt, 23, 26, 37, 77, 82, 88, 101,
 107, 131, 137, 144, 145, 148,
 151-166, 168-174, 176, 177, 179-
 183, 185, 188-191, 193, 195-199,
 201-204, 207, 209-216, 218, 221,
 229, 234-243, 245, 247-249, 251,
 254-258, 260, 261, 263-265, 267-
 272, 275-293, 295-297, 299-306,
 308, 311, 312, 314, 315, 319-
 323
 Littleton, 288, 306
 Littleton, Alfred, 293, 309
 Lloyd, 299
 Lortzing, 48
 Lucas, 50
 Ludwig, King, 246, 247, 275
 Lunn, Rev. J. R., 105
 Luther, 37

 Macbean, 156, 157
 Macfarren, Sir George, 298, 313
 Mackenzie, Sir A. C., 298, 316,
 317
 Maglioni, 150
 Malten, 270
 Manns, 190, 191, 205, 207, 208,
 213, 254, 255, 257, 262, 298,
 322, 323
 Marchesi, 148
 Mario, 11
 Marks, Stacey, 299
 Martineau, Rev. Dr. James, 299
 Martineau, David, 7
 Martineau, Russell, 6, 12
 Materna, Mme., 252, 268, 270
 Mathews, James, 128
 Matthews, Mr. and Mrs., 150,
 202
 Mayer, A., 55
 Mayer, Carl, 76, 87
 Mehlig, 199
 Mellon, 2, 9, 10, 13, 14, 20, 38-
 40, 56, 185, 194

 Mendelssohn, 2, 3, 8, 11, 18, 20,
 22, 24, 25, 33, 76, 83, 101-103,
 110, 131, 132, 135, 136, 140,
 151, 160, 162, 163, 170, 172,
 180, 181, 193, 197, 231, 239
 Mendelssohn, Miss, 135, 136
 Menter, 276
 Metastasio, 104, 128
 Meyerbeer, 12, 102
 Millais, Sir John, 299
 Molique, 8, 55
 Moore, 104, 128
 Morant, Lady Henrietta, 127
 Morley, 77, 78
 Moscheles, 96, 132-136
 Moscheles, Felix, 299
 Mozart, 16, 24, 33-36, 120, 139,
 141, 160, 166, 173, 239
 Murska, 201
 Munkaczy, 288, 303
 Munkaczy, Mme., 295

 Newmarch, 270
 Niemann, 252
 Novello, 279, 298

 O'Leary, 55
 Ollivier, 158
 Orczy, Baron, 293
 Osborn, Miss, 299
 Osgood, Mrs., 241-243, 255
 Overweg, 76

 Pachmann, V. de, 283, 298
 Paget, Sir James, 299
 Papini, 175, 176
 Paque, 54
 Parker, 22
 Parry, Sir Hubert, 298
 Pauer, 99
 Peiniger, 283
 Perkins, 22, 156
 Piatti, 99, 260
 Piccolomini, 92
 Pinelli, 163, 165, 166, 170, 172,
 174
 Pinner, 237, 247
 Plaidy, 87, 132, 138
 Polko, Frau, 76
 Praeger, 200

- Pratten, 10, 14, 126, 185
 Price, 153, 156, 159, 180
 Procter, Miss, 319
 Prückner, 308
 Prudent, 151

 Raff, 199, 235
 Ramacciotti, 160, 164-167, 171, 172
 Raphael, 312
 Ravnkilde, 178
 Reichmann, 268, 270
 Reinecke, 142
 Reisenauer, 308
 Reissiger, 48
 Ricci, 51, 92, 96
 Ricci, Signora, 127
 Richter, Dr., 84, 256, 261, 263, 264, 275, 308
 Rietz, 85
 Rimsky-Korsakov, 26
 Ritter, 156, 157, 160, 164-166, 267, 268
 Ronconi, 92
 Rosa, 141, 144, 298
 Rossi, 52
 Rossini, 34, 35, 38, 42, 96, 141, 167
 Rubinstein, 26, 77, 99, 164, 199, 212, 214, 226, 230, 301, 308
 Rubinstein, Nicholas, 197
 Russell, Dr., 7
 Russell, George, 101

 Saint-Saëns, Dr., 249, 301
 Sambourne, 299
 Santley, 201
 Sarasate, P. de, 287
 Sartiges, Comte de, 176
 Scaria, 268, 270
 Scharwenka, 197
 Scheffsky, Fräulein, 252
 Schiller, 300
 Schleinitz, 135, 136
 Schlosser, 252
 Schneider, 35
 Schopenhauer, 251
 Schroeder-Devrient, 136
 Schubert, 162, 166, 171, 172, 174, 190, 191, 216, 292, 322
 Schuberth, 261
 Schulhoff, 16, 75, 163
 Schumann, 26, 81, 82, 84, 160, 186, 187, 199, 203, 209, 213, 239
 Schumann, Mme., 131, 187
 Schunck, 135, 136
 Schwann, 20, 22
 Scott, Addyes, 7, 60-62, 68
 Scott, Lord and Lady Walter, 299
 Scribe, 12
 Seeburg, 135
 Seidl, 275
 Sémon, Sir Felix, 299
 Sgambati, 148, 160-162, 165-167, 170, 171, 173, 174, 177, 178, 182, 183, 189, 190, 201, 212
 Shakespeare, 34, 124, 211, 227
 Shakespeare, W., 283, 300, 314
 Siehr, 270
 Silas, 16
 Siloti, 308
 Simpson, 9, 14, 20, 39, 40
 Smart, 35
 Smetana, 6
 Sontag, 12, 96
 Spohr, 33, 139
 Sivori, 8
 Stabbach, 55
 Stanford, Professor, 298
 Stassoff, 270
 Stavenhagen, 291, 308
 Steggall, Dr., 298
 Stein, 166, 181, 202
 Steinway, 248, 252
 Stimpson, 4, 21, 101, 102, 128
 Stirling, Mme., 299
 Stockhausen, 135, 136, 241
 Strauss, 22, 36, 271
 Strutt, Miss, 28
 Sullivan, Sir A. S., 132, 135-138, 140, 144, 298

 Tadema, Sir L. Alma, 299
 Tamburini, 11
 Taplin, 20, 22
 Tardieu, Mme., 307
 Tartini, 174
 Tausig, 271

- Taylor, Franklin, 64, 138, 142, 144
 Taylor, Sedley, 299
 Teleki, Count, 260
 Terry, Miss Ellen, 291, 293, 295
 Thalberg, 75, 151, 214
 Thode, 303
 Tiberini, 155
 Tichatschek, 138
 Tietjens, 241
 Tschaikovsky, 26

 Uhland, 261
 Unger, 252
 Ungher-Sabatier, 93, 96, 150

 Verdi, 48, 91
 Vere de Vere, Sir, 127
 Vieuxtemps, 139
 Vogel, 76
 Vogl, 252
 Volkmann, Robert, 203

 Wagner, 26, 29, 36, 37, 82, 83, 148, 188, 191, 196-201, 209, 210, 212-217, 221, 240, 241, 243-251, 256-258, 266-269, 272-275, 313-315
 Wagner, Frau Cosima, 248, 249, 251
 Wagner, Johanna, 29, 37, 120, 138, 252
 Wagner, Siegfried, 272
 Wales, Prince and Princess of, 290
 Wallace, 27
 Weber, 211, 235, 236, 238, 278, 279, 294, 322, 323
 Weckerlin, Fräulein, 252
 Weingartner, 308
 Welch, 208
 Whinery, 208
 White, Rev. Henry, 299
 White, Kirke, 102
 Wiener, 208
 Wieniawski, 133, 166
 Wilhelmj, 132, 251
 Williams, Miss Anna, 257, 299
 Winch, 300
 Winkelmann, 268, 270
 Wolzogen, Freiherr Hans von, 269
 Woodward, Rev., 157
 Woolgar, Miss, 39
 Wüllner, 229
 Zimmermann, Miss Agnes, 299

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24

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CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
GENERAL LITERATURE, . . .	8-22	LEADERS OF RELIGION, . . .	26
METHUEN'S STANDARD LIBRARY, . . .	22	SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY, . . .	27
BYZANTINE TEXTS, . . .	23	UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERIES, . . .	27
LITTLE LIBRARY, . . .	23	COMMERCIAL SERIES, . . .	27
LITTLE GUIDES, . . .	23	CLASSICAL TRANSLATIONS, . . .	28
LITTLE BIOGRAPHIES, . . .	24	METHUEN'S JUNIOR SCHOOL-BOOKS, . . .	28
LITTLE BLUE BOOKS . . .	24	SCHOOL EXAMINATION SERIES, . . .	28
ILLUSTRATED POCKET LIBRARY OF		JUNIOR EXAMINATION SERIES, . . .	28
PLAIN AND COLOURED BOOKS, . . .	24	TEXTBOOKS OF TECHNOLOGY, . . .	28
LIBRARY OF DEVOTION, . . .	25	FICTION, . . .	29-37
WESTMINSTER COMMENTARIES, . . .	25	THE FLEUR DE LIS NOVELS, . . .	37
HANDBOOKS OF THEOLOGY, . . .	26	BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS, . . .	38
CHURCHMAN'S LIBRARY, . . .	26	THE NOVELIST, . . .	38
CHURCHMAN'S BIBLE, . . .	26	METHUEN'S SIXPENNY LIBRARY, . . .	38

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